



SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Shropshire
Archaeological
and
Historical
Society

No. 71, Spring 2011

Website: <http://www.shropshirearchaeology.org.uk>

Newsletter Editor: Hugh Hannaford, Archaeology Service, Historic Environment Team, Shirehall, Shrewsbury, SY2 6ND

Membership Secretary: William Hodges, Westlegate, Mousecroft Lane, Shrewsbury, SY3 9DX

SOCIETY NEWS

AGM: The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society will be held at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury, on **Saturday 9th April 2010** at 9.00am. The AGM will be followed at 10.20am by **The Dark Ages in Shropshire** Dayschool. Dark Age Day School – **Now fully booked.** Many apologies to all the members who were unable to get a place at the Dark Age day school. This has proved far more popular than we imagined, to the extent that we reached the maximum capacity of the Shirehall a month before the meeting. By contrast, the previous two day schools that we have organised had places available for those who turned up unbooked on the day. Whilst it is nice to report on a sell-out, it was very frustrating to have to turn away so many members (and thank-you to all of those who took the news from me with such good grace!) **David Poyner**

Subscriptions: A reminder that subscriptions to the Society for 2011 were due on 1st January. The current rates are £14 Ordinary Membership; £15 Family Membership (two or more people living at the same address); £14 UK Institutions; £18 Overseas Institutions. Cheques/POs should be made payable to "Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society" and sent to the Membership Secretary at the above address.

Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society website

The Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society's website can be found at <http://www.shropshirearchaeology.org.uk/> .

The site is hosted within the Discovering Shropshire's History website -

<http://www.shropshirehistory.org.uk/> You can find details of all the Society's events and publications on our site, as well as links to a wealth of information about Shropshire's archaeology, history, and landscape. If you have any suggestions for content on our pages, please contact me, preferably by email at: archaeology@shropshire.gov.uk or by phone on: 01743 252575

Hugh Hannaford

Circulation of newsletter etc.. If you would like to receive the AGM papers and *Newsletter* electronically, please contact George Baugh (Secretary) by email at: s.baugh@virgin.net

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

After over 30 years service with Shropshire Council, Michael Watson, the Historic Environment Officer (until 2003 the Head of Archaeology) is taking early retirement and will be leaving the Council at the end of March 2011. From 1 April 2011 Hugh Hannaford, the Community Archaeologist, will transfer to the Historic Environment Team within Shropshire Council at Shirehall as part of the ongoing restructure within the Council.

NEWS FROM SHROPSHIRE ARCHIVES

The Shropshire Manorial Register.

28 February 2011 saw the launch of the online Shropshire Manorial Register. Over 70 people attended the event at Shropshire Archives which was the culmination of an 18 month project funded by the National Archives. For the first time details of Shropshire Manorial

Records can be searched online at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr. The register includes all records regardless of where they are held so for Shropshire the information covers records held at Shropshire Archives, the National Archives and in other archives and in private hands. Although they are a key resource for local and family history, manorial records are not the easiest records to use, and we hope this project will help to unlock their secrets. We are very pleased to be the first West Midlands archive service to complete their online Manorial Documents Register, and hope other West Midlands services will follow very soon. Thanks must go to Sara Downs, the project officer, who has worked extremely hard on the project, and also to the volunteers who have made an important contribution to the project's success.

EVENTS

Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society

See enclosure for details of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society's Programme for Summer/Autumn 2009

AGM Saturday 9th April 2011 at 9.00am at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

Saturday 9th April 2011 The Dark Ages in Shropshire Dayschool 10.20am – 4.15pm.

Royal Archaeological Institute & Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

WEEKEND CONFERENCE

Shropshire and West Mercia: recent discoveries and research

Friday May 6th 2011 to Sunday 8th May 2011

The weekend will start on the Friday evening with a keynote lecture by Dr Leslie Webster on the Staffordshire Anglo-Saxon hoard, at 6pm in The Glass Classroom, Coalbrookdale, with refreshments from 5.30pm. On Saturday, papers are to be presented at the Fusion Building, Jackfield Tile Museum, showcasing new and emerging results from the region. The

cost of the weekend (all lectures, field visits and tea, coffee and lunch on Saturday 7th May, but excluding accommodation) will be £82; Conference Dinner (optional) £25. All bookings and payments to be received by Friday 22nd April 2011. If you would like to book a place at the conference, please visit the RAI website at <http://www.royalarchinst.org/conferences> and download and complete the booking form, returning it with your payment to the RAI administrator.

Roger White

National Association of Mining History Organisations

Mining History Conference in Shropshire Friday 29th- Sunday 31st July

The National Association of Mining History Organisations (NAHMO) is holding its annual conference in Shropshire this year at Preston Montford from Friday 29th - Sunday 31st July. There will be a programme of lectures on the Saturday and Sunday with surface walks and underground trips (for those with the necessary skills). There is a strong Shropshire theme; talks include: Mining in Shropshire 50 years ago (Ivor Brown), The archaeology of Shropshire mines (Colin Richards), Early lead mining in Shropshire (James Lawson), Oswestry's forgotten coalfield (Gordon Hillier), The Clee Hill coalfield (Alf Jenkins) and Excavations at Pitchcroft engine house (David Poyner). Details and booking forms are available at

<http://namhoconference.org.uk> or contact myself (Tel 01562 68638)

David Poyner

Shropshire Council

Archaeology Day Saturday 12th November 2011, 10.00am - 4.15pm, at the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Shrewsbury. Further details and a programme and booking form will be included with the autumn Newsletter.

(Copy deadline for the Autumn 2011 Newsletter is Friday 5th August 2011. Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter editor at the Archaeology Service, or emailed to archaeology@shropshire.gov.uk)



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SOCIETY NEWS

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Meetings Group: The Society's meetings group is looking for members to assist with the practical side of our events programme. If you would like to help out, please contact the newsletter editor.

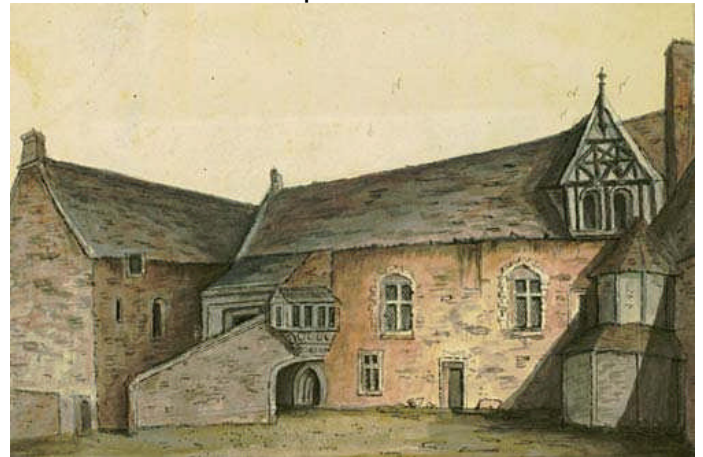
Website: The Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society's website can be found at <http://www.shropshirearchaeology.org.uk> You can find details of all the Society's events and publications on our site, as well as links to a wealth of information about Shropshire's archaeology, history, and landscape. If you have any suggestions for content on our pages, please contact the web editor, preferably by email at: archaeology@shropshire.gov.uk or by phone on: 01743 252575

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SHROPSHIRE MUSEUMS SERVICE

Shropshire Council is undertaking a major restoration and refurbishment project of Shrewsbury's Music Hall and a series of associated historic buildings including

Vaughan's Mansion, a medieval merchant's house which make up the site.



Vaughan's Mansion (courtesy Shropshire Archives)

This complex of buildings will house a new museum and provide a new special exhibitions space for visiting temporary displays. There will also be a shop, information centre and café on the ground floor. A programme of events and activities will make up an important part of the work of the museum including innovative uses of archive and film material. Entry to the museum and art gallery will be free.

As part of this development the Museum Service has commissioned, from professional model makers 3D Perfect of Ludlow, a 1:160 scale model of the medieval English Bridge, Shrewsbury. The two metre long model will be exhibited in the medieval gallery within the hall of Vaughan's Mansion. The English Bridge actually comprised two bridges. The structure seen in most old illustrations, with its gatehouse, was the Stone Bridge. This was roughly on the site of the present English Bridge, and 'terminated' on Coleham Island. This island was destroyed at the time of the construction of the new bridge in 1768. Another, larger adjacent, island on which stands

the United Reformed Church and houses in Coleham Head, also no longer exists as an island. The branch of the River Severn that went behind it, and allowed access for boats directly to the Abbey precinct, had silted up by the 19th century; but it reappears during times of flood.



Coleham Island (© 3D perfect)

The second bridge – the Monk’s or Abbot’s Bridge - crossed this branch of the river from this island almost to the Abbey precinct. Silting probably also accounted for the covering up of a length of the Stone Bridge from close to the foot of the ‘The Wyle’ (the central section of Wyle Cop) to today’s bridgehead. In total the length of the combined structure was originally nearly 1000 feet.

The aim of the model is;

- To complement paintings of the old medieval English bridge on a graphic panel behind it.
- To show that the weak points of the town’s defences – the routes in from north, west and east - were heavily fortified.
- To emphasise the technical excellence of the medieval builders of the bridge
- To show how much the townscape of the English bridge area has changed since the old bridge existed.
- To allow the visitor to explore the complexity of the structure and realise that it was not only a bridge but a defensive work, an opportunity for trade and, later, a means of propelling water into the town.

The model includes the three main elements of the old medieval bridge; the Stone Bridge from Wyle Cop to Coleham Island, Coleham Island itself and the Monk’s Bridge from Coleham

Island to the precinct of Shrewsbury Abbey. It sets the bridge in its original context by including the River Severn and it’s, now disappeared, tributary and also that part of the Rea brook which entered the Severn downstream of the bridge prior to 1768. The bridgeheads at the town and Abbey ends are also included.

The bridge is modelled as it existed between 1705, when the waterwheel was constructed, and 1732 when the drawbridge was replaced by an arch. Inevitably, given the paucity of views of the bridge, some aspects of the model are conjectural but every effort has been made to glean information from written and cartographic sources to ‘fill the gaps’.

The research of A W Ward, much of which appeared in the Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, combined with 18th century paintings and engravings of the bridge, was the basis for ensuring the accuracy of the model. Dr Nigel Baker and Bill Champion also advised on a number of issues. The model maker offered essential insights into bridge construction and was an excellent partner in the project. He has created web pages on which the construction of the model can be viewed along with the completed model and comparison views of old images and parts of the model:

<http://www.bridge.cd2.com/index.htm>

Phil Scoggins

Interpretation Officer, Music Hall Project ,
Shropshire Museums Service

NEWS FROM SHROPSHIRE ARCHIVES

Volunteering for Shropshire’s Heritage project

I am pleased to tell you that we have been successful with our funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support this project. Starting in the autumn this 3 year project will enable us to support and develop 250 volunteers at Shropshire Archives and Shropshire Museums Service. We will be appointing 4 member so of staff to recruit, train and support volunteers working on conservation, cataloguing, digitisation and research into the archive and museums collections. The Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society is supporting this project with a contribution of £1,000.

The archive collections to be worked on comprise:

- *Photographic collections*: We aim to complete cataloguing of 75% of the photograph collection and at least 50% will also be digitised.
- *Much Wenlock Borough Collection*: This collection will be completely catalogued.
- *Shrewsbury Borough Collection*: The following series have been selected for cataloguing and conservation work:
 - Subsidy and tax records 13th -18th century;
 - Cataloguing and Digitisation Mayors' and bailiffs' accounts 13th century – 1819;
 - Cataloguing Militia records 14th century – 1821;
 - Cataloguing and Conservation of Records of cattle and horse fairs 1525-1674;
 - Cataloguing and Conservation of Quarter Sessions records 1564-1664;
- *Miscellaneous Archive Collections (MIs)*: This collection will be fully catalogued.
- *Printed pamphlet collections (vfs)*: 60% of the collection will be catalogued.

Please look out for more information about the project once we get started in the autumn.

Social media

Shropshire Archives has taken its first steps into the world of social media using Flickr and Facebook to reach out to people across the internet. These new services can be found via our website.

On Flickr you can find collections of images, including scenes of snowy Shropshire (in case you need cooling down in the hot summer), Leisure in past times, and Market Towns. These aim to give people a taste of the resources we have. We hope you will comment and add information to the images which we can then incorporate into our catalogues.

On Facebook you'll find information and opportunities to comment and discuss issues with us. If you're already a member of Facebook please visit our page and 'like' us, or if you haven't joined yet, perhaps this is the moment to take the plunge!

Please send any comments on these to: Mary McKenzie, County Archivist, Shropshire Archives, Castle Gates, Shrewsbury, SY1 2AQ
email: mary.mckenzie@shropshire.gov.uk
website: www.shropshirearchives.org.uk

Mary McKenzie

EVENTS

Friends of Shropshire Archives

Sunday 2 October 2011 10am-4pm at St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury: Friends of Shropshire Archives and Shrewsbury Drapers Company Day School: 'Shrewsbury Drapers Company: origins and years of success'

Tuesday 8 November 2011 7pm at Shropshire Archives: Friends of Shropshire Archives Annual Lecture: 'Making the Medieval Book' Dr Brian Davies

Saturday 24 March 2012 10am-4.30pm. Friends of Shropshire Archives History Day, at the Silvester Horne Institute, Church Stretton. Speakers include: Dr Peter Toghill, Dr Ian Dormor and Tony Crowe.

Please contact **Shropshire Archives** for tickets and further information for these events: tel: 01743 255350, email: archives@shropshire.gov.uk

Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society

See enclosure for details of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society's Programme for Summer/Autumn 2009

AGM Saturday 14th April 2012 at 11.00am at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury. The afternoon speaker will be Dr Vince Gaffney, Professor of Landscape Archaeology and Geomatics at Birmingham University

Shropshire Council

Archaeology Day Saturday 12th November 2011, 10.00am - 4.15pm, at the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Shrewsbury. Further details and a programme and booking form are included with this Newsletter or can be downloaded from the Archaeology Service website:

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/archaeology.nsf>

(Copy deadline for the Spring 2012 Newsletter is Friday 2nd March 2012. Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter editor at the Archaeology Service, or emailed to archaeology@shropshire.gov.uk)



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Membership Secretary: Bill Hodges is retiring as the Society's Membership Secretary after 5 years. We need a replacement to keep the records, collect subscriptions, and help with the mailings to members. If you are willing to do this essential job for the Society (no need for great knowledge of archaeology or history required!) please give Bill a ring on 01743 231357

Newsletter Editor: Likewise, Hugh Hannaford is stepping down as Newsletter Editor after 19 years. Again, if you would be willing to take this job on, please contact Hugh at:

hugh.hannaford@shropshire.gov.uk or by phone on: 01743 252575

Meetings Group: The Society's meetings group is looking for members to assist with the practical side of our events programme. If you would like to help out, please contact the newsletter editor.

Subscriptions: The current rates are £14 Ordinary Membership; £15 Family Membership (two or more people living at the same address); £14 UK Institutions; £18 Overseas Institutions. Cheques/POs should be made payable to "Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society" and sent to the Membership Secretary at the above address.

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Iron-working sites around Cleobury Mortimer and Stottesdon

The Shropshire Historical and Archaeological Society recently gave a grant of £400 to the Four Parishes Heritage Group to investigate a number of iron-working sites around Cleobury Mortimer and Stottesdon. The group has been investigating the iron industry in this part of Shropshire since 2007, in collaboration with Dr Tim Young of GeoArch. The first technology used to smelt iron was the bloomery. In this the iron was heated to around 1,200°C with charcoal. This was hot enough to produce a liquid slag containing the impurities in the ore, but the iron itself remained as a solid lump. At the very end of the 15th century this technology was replaced by the blast furnace, where the temperature was now hot enough to melt the iron. Blast furnaces could produce far more iron than bloomeries and so spread rapidly.

Two of the earliest blast furnaces in the Midlands were located in the Wyre Forest and date from

around 1570. The group recently carried out a geophysical and topographical survey of one of these and as an extension of our project, used some of the society's grant to carry out a chemical analysis of the slag from the furnace. By the 17th century large quantities of limestone were added to blast furnaces to act as flux; however, our chemical analysis has confirmed that in 1570 this technology had not fully evolved and the iron masters used much smaller charges of limestone.

We have also discovered a number of bloomeries. For two of these, the dating was problematic and so we used the remainder of our grant to pay for radiocarbon dating. A charcoal sample from one of the furnaces dates from 1400-1440; a sample from the other is 1300-1400. To this can be added evidence from pottery that dates a third furnace to 1200-1300. Thus it seems that iron was being made in this area for much of the Middle Ages.

David Poyner

NEWS FROM SHROPSHIRE ARCHIVES

Victorian Entertainments exhibition The Victorian Entertainments exhibition at Theatre Severn and The Old Market Hall in Shrewsbury has been a great success. The exhibition showcased our collection of Victorian entertainment posters, and provided a fascinating insight into both Victorian music hall acts and the art of Victorian advertising posters. Dating from the 1840s, a stunning array of touring acts was represented. Acrobats, hot air balloons, magicians and menageries of animals from around the world were just some of the spectacles which visited Shropshire in the Victorian era. These entertainments reflect Victorian society in all its diversity, as performers attempted to astonish, inform and entertain their audiences. We are very grateful to the Eyton family for their permission to exhibit items from their collection.

After Offa project Shropshire Archives has supported the recently completed Heritage Lottery funded After Offa project organised by the Bronygarth Social Committee. The project has celebrated life along the English and Welsh border by collecting memories and stories of those who live there. All the memories have now been deposited at Shropshire Archives and will be available for research in due course. For more information about the project see www.afteroffa.org

Shelton Heritage project We are also working with the Shelton Heritage project which will explore the history and heritage of Shelton hospital as the

hospital itself moves to new premises on its existing site. Shelton hospital is one of the last Victorian asylums still being used for its original purpose. The project will explore existing archives and collect memories and stories from both patients and staff. For further details about the project and if you are interested in getting involved please contact Dave Reeves, Project Officer at shelton.heritage@sssft.nhs.uk.

Mary McKenzie

EVENTS

Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society

See enclosure for details of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society's Programme for Summer 2012

AGM Saturday 14th April 2012 at 11.00am at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury. The afternoon speaker will be Dr Vince Gaffney, Professor of Landscape Archaeology and Geomatics at Birmingham University

Friends of Shropshire Archives and the Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage project

Discover Shropshire Day Saturday 29th September 2012 10.30am-4.00pm, at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury. This year the day will celebrate the success of the Volunteering for Shropshire's heritage project, with displays, talks and demonstrations highlighting the wonderful variety of Shropshire's outstanding archive and museum collections. Come along to meet local enthusiasts and experts, to learn more, and to share your own knowledge. Come and enjoy....At 11am talk by archaeologist and author, Nigel Baker: 'All the answers? Medieval Shrewsbury from archives and from archaeology'

- Displays and talks from local history and heritage groups
- Opportunities to find out more about volunteering at archives and museums

Shropshire Council Archaeology Service

Archaeology Day Saturday 3rd November 2012, 10.00am - 4.15pm, at the Council Chamber, Shirehall, Shrewsbury. Further details and a programme and booking form are included with the autumn Newsletter or will be available from August for download from the Archaeology Service website:

<http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/archaeology.nsf>

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Tel: 01743 271706. **E:** shelagh228@msn.com

Membership Secretary: William Hodges, Westlegate, Mousecroft Lane, Shrewsbury, SY3 9DX

SOCIETY NEWS

Special General Meeting of the Society: As authorized by the A.G.M. on 14th April 2012, a Special General Meeting will be held at 2p.m. on Saturday 13th October 2012 before that afternoon's lecture (see the 2012-2013 winter programme), for the single purpose of receiving the accounts of the retiring Hon. Treasurer for the 15 months January 2011 – March 2012. Please accept this notice as a formal summons to attend. The accounts will be distributed at the Meeting and circulated with the 2013 A.G.M. papers. A member wishing to have them before the October Meeting should apply to George Baugh, Hon. Sec.

Newsletter Editor: Hugh Hannaford has stepped down as Newsletter Editor after 19 years service. His place has been taken by Shelagh Hampton and any information for inclusion in the newsletter should be sent to her at 7, Elstree Close, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9QF or shelagh228@msn.com

Membership Secretary: Bill Hodges has done this absolutely essential job for many years and is hoping to retire from it before too long. The Hon. Sec. would therefore be glad to hear from any potential volunteer to take over the work. Anyone interested should contact George Baugh at s.baugh@virgin.net or at Glebe, House, Vicarage Road, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9EZ (tel: 01743 236914)

Members' email addresses: The society is very grateful to all those members who have given their email addresses to the Hon. Sec. This saves the Society a great deal in postage. The email addresses are kept quite confidential by the Hon. Sec. and the Hon. Membership Sec. Any change of email address should be sent to George Baugh at s.baugh@virgin.net

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Glazeley Church

A priest was recorded at Glazeley in the Domesday survey and a church was certainly present around 1155 when the incumbent claimed power over the neighbouring settlement of Deuxhill where Wenlock Abbey had just established a chapel. However, the present church dates from 1873-5, built to replace a building that in itself was possibly largely a 16th century reconstruction of the medieval church. The current church contains a fine late 16th century brass to Thomas Wylde and his wife; outside are two fonts (one medieval and one possibly 18th century), a medieval stone coffin and two medieval coffin lids. There is additionally a late 18th century memorial slab to the Rev Charles Wylde and his son that seems to have been mounted on the wall of the demolished church. The current church, designed by Sir Arthur Bloomfield and with stained glass by C.E. Kemp, is grade II listed, due to it being a largely unaltered example of a rural Gothic Revival church retaining its internal fittings.

Recently the church roof suffered serious damage and serious consideration was given to closing the church; indeed a farewell closing service was held. However, this stimulated enough interest in the local community to raise the funds to repair the roof and to reopen the church. Thus the future of the building and its fittings is now looking much brighter.

Billingsley Church

Billingsley Church was established by c.1140. It was largely rebuilt in 1875 by G.E. Street but this seems to have been a sympathetic restoration, preserving or accurately reconstructing original features as

far as possible. The current church has a blocked Norman doorway in the middle of the nave, an early 14th century Easter Sepulchre and a piscina in the nave and a wooden carved porch, dating from the late 14th or 15th centuries.

Recently, major repairs have taken place including rehangng of the bells. One of these is by Abraham Rudhall, dated 1707; the other seems to be 14th century and is a rare example of a narrow-waisted design. As part of a community project to discover more about the history of the church, the carpet at the back of the nave was removed to reveal around 40 medieval floor tiles and three memorials dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. These had been reset at the time of the 1875 rebuilding. The earliest memorial is to Jane, the daughter of William Bradley of Worcester who died May 1637. The Worcester St Swithin parish registers record the baptism of Jane, daughter of William Bradley in 1623; thus she was 14 when she died. The size of the second memorial to two members of the Smythes family from 1655 and 1694, suggests it may have originated as a chest tomb. The third memorial, to Edward Broadfield, from the late 18th century, was probably mounted on the wall. The floor tiles are most likely to be of 14th century date. The Easter sepulchre can be tentatively ascribed to Alice de Beysin, widow of Walter de Beysin (an MP for Shrewsbury) and a coat of arms that once was in a window were those of her great grand-daughter, Julianna de Crewe. A wall painting of St Agnes, noted during the 1875 reconstruction, may have been commissioned by Julianna to commemorate her mother, Agnes.

David Poyner

NEWS FROM SHROPSHIRE ARCHIVES

Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage project:

The project is going very well with the target of volunteers already exceeded! Volunteers are working on cataloguing, conservation and digitisation work on archive and museums collections. For further details contact john.benson@shropshire.gov.uk

Shelton Heritage project: We are also working with the Shelton Heritage project which will explore the history and heritage of Shelton hospital as the hospital itself moves to new premises on its existing site. Shelton hospital is one of the last Victorian asylums still being used for its original purpose. The project will explore existing archives and collect memories and stories from both patients and staff.

Online catalogue: You may have noticed that our online catalogue on www.shropshirehistory.org.uk has changed. If you click on the advanced search button you'll see the new version, which now holds over 260,000 archive records. We are still working on the presentation of the catalogue but we hope this represents a big improvement on what we had before. Please let us know what you think. We'll keep you informed of progress;

Mary McKenzie

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

Cancellation: Due to circumstances beyond the control of the Archaeology Service the Archaeology Day scheduled for Saturday 3rd November 2012 will not now be taking place.

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Tel: 01743 252558 (office hours) **E:** penny.a.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

SOCIETY NEWS

AGM: The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society will be held at The Shirehall, Shrewsbury, on Saturday 14th September 2013 at 9.30am. The AGM will be followed, at 10.20am by the **Prehistory in Shropshire Day School** (for details see the enclosed Meetings Programme).

Membership Secretary: Bill Hodges has stepped down as Membership Secretary after many years of service. His place has been taken by Penny Ward (contact details at head of Newsletter). We are pleased to report that Bill has agreed to be co-opted to the Council of the Society.

Subscriptions and Mailings: The subscription rates remain at £14 for Ordinary Membership; £15 for Family Membership (two or more people living at the same address); £14 for UK institutions and £18 for overseas institutions. Cheques / Postal Orders should be made payable to Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society and sent to the Membership Secretary at the address at the head of the Newsletter.

Costs, of course, continue to rise and we will be most grateful if as many members as possible sign up to pay by standing order and if all members make an effort to pay their subs by the end of March each year. Chasing up unpaid subs is becoming increasingly expensive and we would like to keep any

future increases in membership rates to a minimum.

Another big help to the Society's finances will be if more members agree to receive the Newsletter and other Society papers and notices by email. Everyone is aware of the 2012 increases in postal charges and we are certain to see further increases so communication via email which already saves the Society a great deal of money will save even more in the future. We are currently trying to expand the Newsletter to include more news of projects and events taking place around the county and to cover activities being organised by some of the many local societies in Shropshire and this will, inevitably, involve some increase in costs.

Members' email addresses are kept completely confidential by the Hon. Sec. and the Hon. Membership Sec. so please – if you have the facility and are willing to join our distribution list or if you have changed your email address – contact George Baugh at s.baugh@virgin.net

Meetings Group: The Society's Meetings Group would like to hear from anyone willing to join the group and become involved with the development of the Society's events programme. The task is not onerous and offers a chance to put forward suggestions for events, activities and topics you would like us to cover. If you would like to help please contact the Newsletter editor.

Christmas Social meetings

The recent December meeting in the new Visitor Centre at the Acton Scott Museum was but one in the long line of such social gatherings, which have taken place over the last twenty to thirty years with a similar formula: different venues, a talk about it, time to chat, refreshments and entertainment thrown in.

The tradition first arose from two ideas. Firstly the need for a slot in which members could make their own contributions with short talks or displays of material. Secondly, when normal meetings were held in central Shrewsbury it was desirable to escape from the busy Christmas shopping weekend. The spirit of Christmas nevertheless added refreshment and some light entertainment.

With these criteria in mind a great variety of venues have been used, ranging from large institutions such as Attingham, Acton Burnell and Adcote School to much smaller interesting farmhouses. Many of these were studied and published by Madge Moran and her Whitchurch Group. We are most grateful for all those owners who not only allowed the group to crawl over their private homes, but also to invite



more inspection and invasion by our Christmas gatherings. Fortunately we had the resources to help them out with plastic chairs and cups if needed!

In return, many owners were proud to show off their successful restorations of historic properties such as The Hayes at Oswestry or the Stone House by Grinshill. The Community Group at St Anne's church Lea Cross likewise were proud to show off their improvements for public use.

The general aim over the years has been for such meetings to be self-financing, but costs and income can vary so much with donations, cost of catering and numbers attending. When society's funds have been needed to 'top up', it has been normally been no more than routine room hire costs anyway.

Many regulars have supported the meetings over the years and obviously appreciate the formula, so that we must try to continue. This means finding suitable venues and therefore ideas would be welcome. Please contact David Pannett, Merton, Shepherd Lane, Bicton, Shrewsbury, SY3 8BT. Tel: 01743 850773; E: jessicapannett@hotmail.co.uk

David Pannett

Shropshire Archives News March 2013

Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage Project

The Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage Project started in December 2011. So far the volunteers have contributed an astonishing 2,953 days' work across the archive and museums services. Although I knew how much interest there was in Shropshire's heritage across the county, I have to admit to being slightly overwhelmed at the enthusiasm and commitment the volunteers have shown over the last year or so. The result of all this enthusiasm is that almost 40,000 records and objects have been catalogued and over 26,000 items have been digitised or conserved.

This is a great achievement and shows what can be done with a dedicated resource to support volunteers. As well as thanking all the volunteers, I'd also like to express my thanks to the project team who have been key to this success, and of course to the Heritage Lottery Fund for supporting the project. We look forward to seeing what can be done in the next two years!

Digitisation of records:

Work on digitising parish registers and other records of interest to family historians is progressing to target and will be completed shortly. This work has been funded by Shropshire Council. Following the completion of the digitisation work, we will be investigating the options of working with a commercial partner to provide on-line access to the records on a paid for subscription basis.

The income from this will provide key financial support for the archive service. Free access to the records at Shropshire Archives itself will not be affected by this development, and we hope that allowing access to digital copies will improve the service we can offer. We are currently exploring the options both for access at Shropshire Archives and online, and will keep you informed of developments.

Thursday evenings at the Archives

From April to September this year we will be running a series of informal hands on workshops at Shropshire Archives. These will provide opportunities to find out more about the wide range of fascinating documents held by the service.

In order to accommodate these activities, the search room will be closed from 5pm on these evenings. The reading room will be open as normal.

Please check our website for further details, www.shropshirearchives.org.uk

Friends of Shropshire Archives AGM

7pm Thursday 13 June at Shropshire Archives

'Shropshire Archives 2013 update - a look behind the scenes and into the future', Mary McKenzie and John Benson, Free - refreshments available

Mary McKenzie

Shropshire Archives

Shropshire Museums Service: working towards a new museum for Shrewsbury

The restoration of the Music Hall has presented huge challenges relating to the complex nature of the building whose history stretches back to medieval times. However, these very problems have revealed previously unsuspected aspects of the site's history and have contributed greatly to the significance of the building. The external scaffolding has been removed in recent months and the restoration work to the Market Square frontage has been exposed. Behind the scenes delicate stonework restoration has also taken place within Vaughan's Mansion. This includes the stabilisation of original 13th century windows as well as plaster repairs and restoration of historic joinery within the Music hall auditorium and to the oak frames of Vaughan's Mansion. Work on the installation of new internal staircases, a lift and link walkways is now underway and the new museum and art gallery will be opening to the public later this year.

A number of recent donations form welcome additions to the, already fine, collections and some will feature in the new displays. The largest Roman coin hoard ever discovered in Shropshire has been acquired by the county thanks to grant aid from a variety of sources and local donations from our society (which contributed £500) and from the Friends of Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. The hoard of 9,236 coins, together with the storage jar in which it was buried, will be one of the highlights of the new Roman Gallery.

Another feature of the new displays will be a selection of finds from the Tong area including some of the finds made during excavations at Tong Castle nearly 40 years ago as well as a range medieval finds from Tong which have been donated by a local detectorist.

Emma-Kate Lanyon, Shropshire Museums Service



Archaeology Service News

The Shropshire Minerals Resource Assessment Project

Shropshire's geology is considered to be more varied than any similarly-sized area in Britain - and this has in the past given rise to a variety of industries based on the exploitation of these rich mineral resources. The Archaeology Service of Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Team, is undertaking a Minerals Resource Assessment of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin for English Heritage. The project will assess the impact of past, current and future mineral extraction on the historic environment in Shropshire. The project is being funded by English Heritage and Shropshire Council, and is due to be completed in March 2014.

Hugh Hannaford

Senior Archaeological Projects Officer, Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council

Friends of the Flaxmill Maltings

There will be a Community Archaeology Project run by Oxford Archaeology North at the Ditherington Flax Mill from 15th April 2013 for two weeks followed by a further week when there will be post-excavation activity for visitors to see and participate in.

The Friends of the Flaxmill Maltings are holding an Open Weekend at the Flax mill on 11th and 12th of May 2013.

Further details at <http://www.flaxmillmaltings.co.uk>

Penny Ward

Notes from the finds desk of the PAS

The Portable Antiquities Scheme has been recording archaeological finds made by the public in Shropshire for almost 15 years. Since 2003 we have shared our own reporting officer (Finds Liaison Officer) with Herefordshire. Peter Reavill has held this post from the beginning – being based with the county museum with an office in Ludlow. He updates us now with some of the most recent/important finds discovered in the past 6 months:

Although the weather has been truly 'British' people are still out and about finding really fascinating things and he updates us now with some of the most interesting/rare finds from the past 6 months:

A rare flaked/knapped flint axehead (LVPL-FE45E5), of similar Neolithic date, has been reported from the parish of Stanton Lacy (South Shropshire). The discovery of high status flints here is not surprising as several older finds from the area are held in the museum's collection and, of course, the Bromfield barrow complex is close by. This type of axehead is relatively uncommon in Shropshire – most recorded examples are of polished stone. This example has been knapped from an oval nodule and small areas of cortex are present on the outer surfaces.



A very fine and well-preserved Middle-Late Bronze Age 'trunnion' chisel has been reported from Bridgnorth (HESH-51B7E2). These tools are extraordinarily rare but this find fits the known distribution pattern very well. There is a cluster of similar examples from the northern Marches and North East Wales (e.g. Wrexham). A good parallel for the latest find can be seen in the hoard from Edgbold Brickyard (Meole brace) discovered in the 1920s. The term 'trunnion chisel' is applied because of the little projections of the edge which prevent the blade being driven into its haft when in use.



The county is well-known for its Roman archaeology and three noteworthy finds have been made recently. The first is a 'Polden Hill'-type brooch which is particularly fine and shows just how good



roman casting techniques were. This style of brooch is the most common seen in the Marches and the West Midlands and lead patterns for casting have been found within the county. This example was found on the slopes of Clee Hill (South Shropshire)

The second example is a zoomorphic place brooch in the form of a cockerel (WMID-F66333) from Sheinton (well known to many because of the recent project organised there by Hugh Hannaford.



The cockerel is often associated with Mercury (the messenger of the Gods) because cockerels herald the arrival of the new day. This form of brooch is securely dated to the 2nd century AD and is a very rare find not just from the county but from the region.

The final Roman find is a stylised Eagle Mount (WAW-OAEOC4) from the Bridgnorth area. The mount is most probably from either a piece of horse harness or from a piece of furniture. It is likely to have been associated with the military – a very similar example was found on a military camp on the Rhine in Germany.



The last find in this round-up is from the Telford area. It is very fragmentary but can be identified as part of a chip-carved strap end (HESH-B84126) dating to the 10th century AD. Its decoration is in the Viking/Anglo-Scandinavian Borre style and is known to specialists as 'vertebral ring chain'. Although broken it is hugely important to the county and reflects the later dominance of Viking-looking finds in the north of Shropshire. This suggests that people in those parts were taking their lead (stylistically at least) from the Danelaw to the north east rather than to the Saxon/Wessex kingdoms.



Peter Reavill
Finds Liaison Officer

2012: A BUSY YEAR AT UPTON CRESSETT

Archaeological work at Upton Cressett has not featured in a Shropshire Archaeology and History Society newsletter for many years, although the Roman site was first formally mentioned in this publication by Geoff Toms in 1970 and 1973. These reports sparked my initial investigations of the site, under the aegis of the Wroxeter Hinterland Project. A visit to the Pugh family's farmhouse confirmed the importance of the site with over 1000 sherds collected up to that point ranging in date from the 1st to 4th century. In addition there were metal finds of many dates, but predominantly Roman, as well as flints of Neolithic and Bronze Age date. A geophysical survey and small excavation was carried out on the site in 2009, the former identifying the parallel ditches of what looked like a Roman roadside settlement with plots running at right angles from the road, similar to excavated examples from Shropshire at Heath Road, south of Whitchurch and Meole Brace. Good groups of stratified pottery were recovered that demonstrated occupation dates consistent with the material recovered from fieldwalking. One of the features was a large industrial pit related to iron working (or at least containing the waste from the process of iron working) while others may have been structural. A further geophysical survey, carried out in March 2012, attempted to trace the roadside ditches into the field to the north, Moor Barn field, but without success. Surface survey in this location – between the hedge and the site of the collapsed Moor Barn itself (a timber framed structure of unknown date) – located sherds of 16th and 17th century pottery and some ceramic building material perhaps related to the occupation of the building. This may be masking the underlying Roman evidence. It is hoped at some point that a survey can be carried out north of the spinney now planted around the site of Moor Barn. Here, the edge of the Upton Cressett plateau is approached, giving commanding views down to Morville and across to Brown Clee, the Wrekin, Wenlock Edge, and towards the Clent Hills. This spot seems an ideal location for a Roman fort, which would explain the road and its roadside settlement in what might seem otherwise a backwater. It would also explain the highly significant cluster of abundant pottery which includes coarse wares but also fine imported beakers and decorated samian, unusual in a rural context in Shropshire. Latterly, in December 2012, fieldwalking was carried out on the site with a small group led by the author and John Sunderland of Allfield, Condover. The latter is studying for a PhD in Photography at the University of Northampton and bases his work on landscape archaeology. In this instance, the process and discoveries of fieldwalking formed the focus of his study, the results of which will be incorporated into the new galleries at the re-launched Shrewsbury Museum when it opens in its new venue in the Music Hall. Among the finds located on this occasion, in addition to more Roman pottery, were a bloom base of presumably Roman date and a glazed and decorated sherd dated to ca. 1250-1350. It is important to note that as a review of the heritage assets of Upton Cressett, the Roman site in Parlour Coppice has now been listed as an ancient monument (List Entry Number 1409733). The generous help of the Pugh family in these researches is greatly appreciated.

A planned excavation in Moor Barn field did not, in the end, take place. Instead, work was relocated to the former orchard opposite the gatehouse of Upton Cressett Hall on land owned by Roger Cantrill, whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged. The work was supervised by Henry Chapman and Kristina Krawiec for the University of Birmingham with the author as advisor. The aim here was to assess the supposed site of a deserted medieval village presumed to be associated with the 12th century Church of St Michael, adjacent to the site and to Upton Cressett Hall. The excavations, assisted by Andy Johnson, found that the site is heavily disturbed but from a single ditch came stratified cooking pot of a similar date to the sherd found in fieldwalking 500m away. This site too has now been listed, (Entry Number 1409739) while Upton Cressett Hall, its gatehouse and the Church have also been separately upgraded to Grade 1.

Roger White
University of Birmingham



'Mystery object' – possibly a tankard handle – found at Upton Cressett)



Mr Pugh's grandson with one of his finds

Newport Butter Cross

Recent archaeological investigations by SLR Consulting Ltd and Newport Historical Society around the Butter Cross (or Puleston Cross) in the High Street, Newport (Figure 1), are the first archaeological excavations within this historic town. They have demonstrated the survival of archaeological deposits and features at a shallow depth below the existing ground surface and thus illustrate the great potential the town has for containing a wealth of archaeological information.

The Butter Cross is constructed of a five-course Old Red Sandstone stylobate block base, and according to documentary sources, was erected in 1286, as a memorial to Roger de Pyvelesdon (hence the name Puleston Cross). During the English Civil War the cross was severely vandalised resulting in the upper section of the cross being removed.

The investigations have revealed the presence of a largely forgotten building, the Butter Market (Figure 2), in which the Cross was contained, and a deposit sequence that corroborates the historical record of Cross, Butter Market, Great Fire, reconstruction, and demolition.



Figure 2

The excavations also revealed the foundations for terraced houses set against the churchyard precinct. In addition a sample was taken from the buried soil beneath the cross base and this was dated by Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) to AD 1095 (AD 916 – 1205), but interestingly a possible disturbance event was also detected, dated to around 1635 (AD 1577 - 1698).

This OSL dating has established that the cross was built upon a buried soil of probable 12th century date, which is perhaps a century before the cross was erected, with subsequent activity in the 17th century (Figure 3). Artefactual evidence also appears to exist for later disturbance, perhaps repairs (or the possible movement of the cross), during the 17th century. It is unsurprising that artefacts earlier than the 17th century were not recovered due to the very minimal investigation beneath the Cross plinth that was possible during this watching brief, so virtually all finds have come from the disturbed area surrounding the plinth. It is probable that the artefacts are associated with the construction of the Butter Market and related contemporary maintenance works to the Cross. Based on archaeological evidence in the form of surviving brick foundations (Figure 4) this 17th century Butter Market building appears to have enclosed the Butter Cross, before being demolished in 1866 when it fell out of use and was replaced by a general market hall, located south of Middle Row.

The Newport History Society have a theory that the cross could have been moved in 1633, following the construction of a market hall (built by William Adams¹). Around this time a butter and cheese market building was constructed

¹ Adams left money for the Butter Market to be moved.

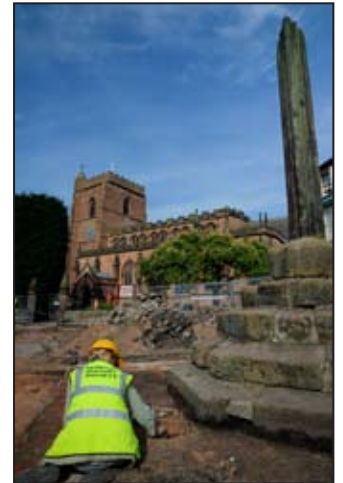


Figure 1

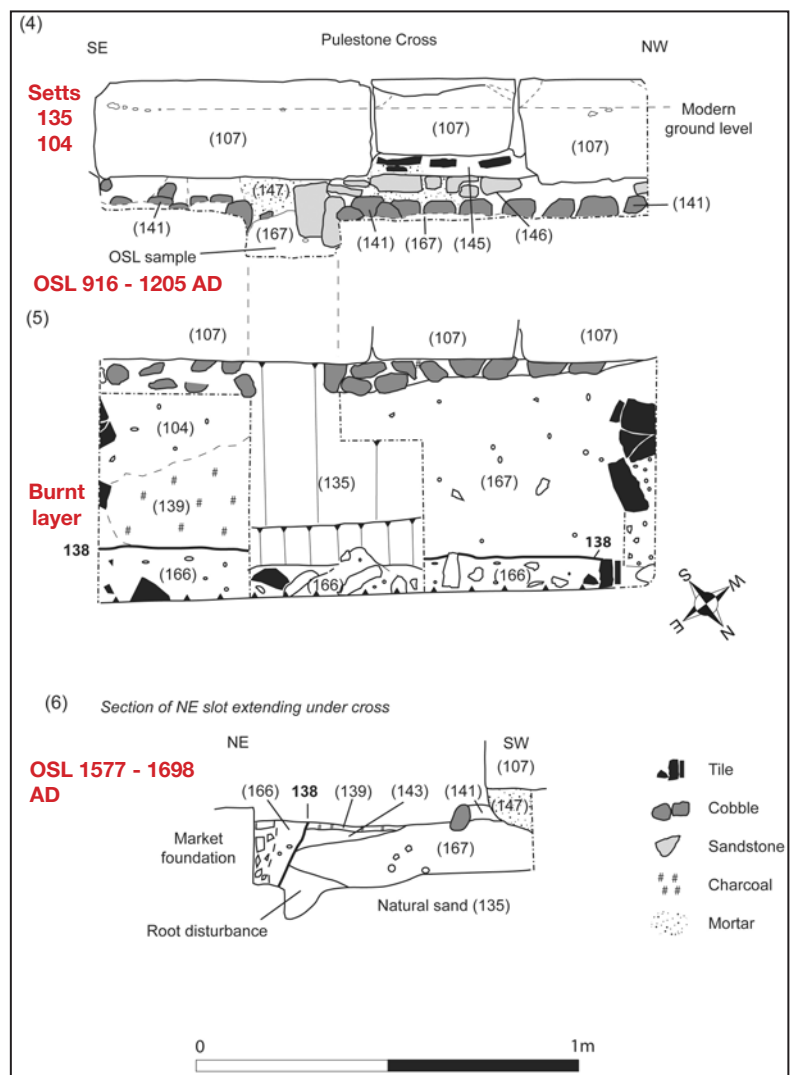


Figure 3

within the vicinity of the cross by Richard Barnefield.² The cross may have been rebuilt within a replacement building in 1665 by Thomas Talbot of Longford House.

The key historical dates below seem to correspond with the evidence revealed by our investigations (which are outlined in bracketed italics):

- Roger de Pynelesdon d.1272 - cross erected by son (OSL date 916 – 1205 AD)
- 1292 Nicholas de Audley granted land for day to day trading in Newport 40 x 30ft from wall of churchyard (house of Richard Blakelow (Middle Row?)) to Highway and from churchyard wall to Cross erected for Lord Roger de Pyneslesdon (This corroborates the original position of the Cross as the location where it now stands)
- 1309 Richard Attebruggehend conduits water from Walls Head Spring, Church Aston with four cisterns, including at Upper Bar, at the south end of the Market Hall, at the Butter Cross, and at Lower Bar (the sequence of all four progress from south to north placing the Butter Cross next to the church)
- 1632 William Barnfield built timber-frame house to sell butter and cheese near Pulston Cross (perhaps this is represented archaeologically by deposit 143 of 17th Century date (see Figure 3))
- 1665 Great fire of Newport – 162 houses destroyed including Barnfield’s Butter Market (perhaps this is represented archaeologically by deposit 139, ash and charcoal (see Figure 3))
- 1665 Thomas Talbot had Butter Market rebuilt out of stone
- 1681 Wm Hill’s estate map includes Newport High St and shows Butter Market
- 1840 Tithe map shows Butter Market building
- 1866 Butter Market demolished (perhaps this is represented archaeologically by deposit 104, of 18th/19th C date)
- 1902 OS map shows Butter Cross and Northern Terrace buildings surviving
- 1920s OS mapping shows Northern Terrace has been demolished



Figure 4

Although the possibility exists that the cross could have been moved to its present location in 1633 by William Adams, such a hypothesis is unlikely because without the protection of the cross, the buried soil beneath would have been disturbed and exposed to light and therefore would not have produced a much earlier OSL date. In addition this location within the market square adjacent to the church, would be the expected position in which a medieval market cross should be found.

Market crosses were erected as the symbol of a borough’s right to trade, usually located in the centre of the town where the main streets crossed. Symbolically they are also referred to as the omphalos, a Greek word meaning “navel” i.e. the centre of the community. They were thus closely associated with the prosperity of that community and it is therefore no co-incidence that the church at Newport is dedicated to St. Nicholas, who was the patron saint of merchants and traders, as well as many other groups such as sailors and fishermen. The existence of Newport Pool and the documentary evidence that the town supplied fish to the king’s court, may have been another reason for this dedication.

Tim Malim and George Nash

SLR Consulting Ltd.

Acknowledgement: the work was funded by Telford and Wrekin Council as part of a Market Town Improvement Fund and the writers would like to thank Guy Biddulph, lead engineer for the works, who arranged payment for the archaeology.

² The Newport History Society suggests that a Butter Market existed before the mid-17th century and was located to the south of the town. However, following the Great Fire of Newport in 1665, Barnefield’s Butter Market was destroyed. It is presumed that this building was located within the eastern or southern part of the town where the focus of the fire occurred.

Watchmen's huts on the Lilleshall Company Railways

Jim Cooper (Independent Researcher) and Shane Kelleher (Archaeology and Monuments Officer at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust) are currently carrying out research into some very interesting and intriguing structures which, historically, were located on the Lilleshall Company's mineral railway. These domed or beehive-shaped cabins are believed to have housed crossing keepers at road or rail crossing points. However, initial research has shown that these 'watchmen huts' were also found at other locations such as rail junctions, sidings, yards or even adjacent to industrial buildings such as the Priorslee and Lodge Furnaces.

We understand that none of these interesting buildings survives today. Do you know if any do survive? Do you have a photograph of one of these 'huts'? Can you remember where one might have been located or what they were used for? Do you know of any previous research on the topic?

If you can help with any of these queries please contact Shane Kelleher at ironbridge.archaeology@gmail.com or tel: 01952 435900

Shane Kelleher, Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

Book News

'Deeds of the Palmers' Guild of Ludlow', (xxxvi + 329pp), (2012), edited by M.A. Faraday, MA, FSA

Ludlow was a flourishing town in the Middle Ages, making the fortunes of many of its citizens at first from the wool trade and later from the woollen cloth trade. Ludlow castle was also the centre of increasingly important lordships, first that of the Lacys, and later of the Mortimer earls of March, becoming one of the main bases of the House of York, and eventually of the Council in the Marches of Wales. In the mid-13th century its leading burgesses founded the Palmers' Guild, which became the leading institution in the town until its dissolution in 1551, supporting an important chantry in the parish church and a college of chaplains who provided many services, both spiritual and secular, in the town, financing building and ornamentation work in the church, providing a kind of mutual insurance service for its members who came from all over the country, including at one time Richard, duke of York himself. At Pentecost it also held an elaborate annual feast for its members. The college of chaplains was financed from the rental income derived from rent-charges and from the Guild's large number of properties within the town and in some of the parishes outside; these rent-charges and properties had been acquired over the space of 300 years from donations, bequests and purchase. The guild rented them out; at first leases for lives were usual, but later leases for terms of years became more typical. The Guild's archives included the title-deeds for these rent-charges and properties, often demonstrating the donor's own title, so a pre-Guild history can be described for many of them. The Guild came into existence in the late 1250s, but some of the deeds in the archive date from the very early 13th century. Leases subsisting at the time of the Guild's dissolution in 1551 and the surrender

of its properties to the Corporation of Ludlow were often kept after their expiry. This edition of English abstracts of some 1,495 deeds of various kinds, mostly in Latin, some in Norman-French or English, demonstrate the extent of the Guild's interests, but also provide the most important extant source of information about the families of the town and other places, their descents, the derivations of their names and their occupations. The witness-lists to the deeds evidence the holding of offices and show the order of precedence, even of kinship-groups, of these persons at different times. The edition is fully indexed with extensive cross-referencing of variant spellings of names. The collection contains roughly 13,500 references to named individuals living in and around Ludlow, with some in Leominster, Marlborough and other places.

This book may be purchased from the Lulu GB website for £24 (hardback) plus postage, or £16 (paperback) plus postage. Purchasers in the UK may buy directly from the editor for £34 (hardback) or £24 (paperback) including postage – these prices apply until Royal Mail tariffs increase (prob. in April 2013). e-mail: f2594255@gmail.com, payment by cheque to M.A. Faraday, 47 York Gardens, Walton on Thames, Surrey, KT12 3EW. If a purchaser wishes to buy from the editor for delivery at the same time copies of 'The Herefordshire Chantry valuations of 1547' and/or 'The Herefordshire Musters of 1539 and 1542' some savings on postage can be achieved.

More Images of Alveley (£10.00 plus p+p from Tim White on 01746 1182)

A new book of 170 photographs has just been published by the Alveley Historical Society. *More Images of Alveley* covers the period from about the 1930s to 1960s and contains many images of local scenes and families.

(Copy deadline for the Autumn 2013 Newsletter is Friday 19th July 2013. Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter Editor at 7 Elstree Close, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9QF or emailed to shelagh228@msn.com)



SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Shropshire
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Society
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SOCIETY NEWS

AGM: The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society will be held at The Shirehall, Shrewsbury on Saturday 14th September 2013 at 9.30am. The AGM will be followed, at 10.20am, by the *Prehistory in Shropshire Day School*. With a wide-ranging programme this meeting will provide an opportunity to catch up with the latest research on this fascinating, but often enigmatic, period. Places are still available at the very reasonable cost of £15.00 for members and £20.00 for non-members. This includes lunch and afternoon tea. A booking slip can be found at the bottom of the enclosed Meetings Programme leaflet.

Subscriptions and Mailings: The subscription rates remain at £14.00 for Ordinary membership; £15.00 for Family Membership (two or more people living at the same address); £14.00 for UK institutions and £18.00 for overseas institutions. Cheques / Postal orders should be made payable to *Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society* and sent to the Membership Secretary at the address at the head of the Newsletter.

Unfortunately, costs are continuing to rise and, reluctantly, the Council has decided that an increase in annual subscriptions will be soon be necessary. At the 2013 AGM it will be recommended by the Treasurer, on behalf of the Council, that annual subscriptions should be increased by £3.00 from January 2015.

One way in which members, who are UK taxpayers, can assist the Society financially, at no extra cost to themselves, is by filling in a Gift Aid Declaration Form to cover their membership subscriptions. This will allow the Society to reclaim, from the Government, the tax that the member has already paid on that subscription. A Gift Aid Declaration Form is enclosed with this newsletter and we will be most grateful if any tax-paying members, who have not already done so, sign up today.

Meetings Group: The Society's Meetings Group is still looking for new members to assist with the development of the Society's events programme. The task is not onerous and offers the opportunity to put forward suggestions for events, activities and possible lecture topics at the informal meetings of the group. If you would like to help please contact the Newsletter Editor.

The Future of our Past: Members of the Society's Council have been keeping a very close eye on recent events in our neighbouring county of Herefordshire. All local councils are facing budget cuts and the future remains bleak. In Herefordshire it was proposed that major cuts should be made to the libraries and museums budgets (including the archaeology service budget) affecting jobs, resources, services and public access and virtually wiping out some aspects of these services. There have been *some* temporary amendments to the proposals resulting in a *partial* reprieve – for the moment – but draconian cuts in the near future are still on the cards. The same services in Shropshire have already suffered year-on-year cuts and we are concerned that it will only be a matter of time before similar far-reaching proposals are made here which could mean an end to many of the facilities and services which have been built up painstakingly over the years and – of course – an equivalent loss in jobs and expertise. It does not take long to dismantle departments but it takes years to build them up again. We will keep our membership informed of any such proposals which come to our attention and will do our best to rally opposition!

Heritage Open Days 12th – 15th September 2013

The 2013 Heritage Open Days weekend will include open days at Ditherington Flax Mill and the Drapers' Hall in Shrewsbury.

There will also be events and activities elsewhere in the county e.g. at Snailbeach Mine and at the historic canal yard at Ellesmere.

For further information, a full list of venues involved and details of booking requirements visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Archaeology Service News:

The Pitchyard Pottery, Benthall

Clay tobacco pipes were made in Benthall from the later 17th century or earlier using local clays. There are no records of when pottery or pipe-making began at the Pitchyard site next to the New Inn on Bridge Road, Benthall, but the pottery may have been founded in the 18th century. The Pitchyard Pottery, also known as the Benthall Bank Pottery, was leased to Jasper Cox in 1800 and was run between 1814 and 1826 by William Lloyd of Pitchyard House, and from 1826 by his widow. An Elizabeth Lloyd was also landlady of the adjacent New Inn in 1829-35 and this may be the same person. (Benthall, 1957, p159; Stamper, 1998, p251; Piggot, 1829 & 1835.)

The Roden family, who lived in Benthall village and were churchwardens there, had been pipemakers and potters in Benthall and Broseley since at least the mid-17th century and had operated from a number of sites, including the King Street works and the Legge's Hill works in Broseley. Noah Roden I (1770-1829) had perfected the long pipes or "churchwardens" in the 18th century, and supplied London clubs and coffee houses (as well as the local trade). In c. 1829 the Roden family were operating from the Pitchyard Pottery site, and in 1835 Noah Roden II also became landlord of the adjacent New Inn, on Bridge Road. A map of 1835 (Hitchcock 1835) shows the works with a kiln on the site. (Correspondence in HER files for HER 11733; Higgins, 1987, p141; Hitchcock, 1835.)

Edwin Southorn was the younger of two sons of William Southorn, another Broseley pipemaker. The Southorns operated from the nearby Legge's Hill works on the other side of Bridge Road in Broseley Wood where, in the late 17th / early 18th centuries, the Rodens had been manufacturing clay tobacco pipes and slipware pottery. Edwin joined Noah Roden II at his factory on the Pitchyard Pottery site, probably around 1850, apparently following a dispute in the Southorn family (but the Rodens and Southorns were also connected by marriage). After Noah's death in 1855, the Pitchyard Pottery was initially operated by his widow, but in 1858 Edwin Southorn took over the business, which by this time was producing clay pipes. Edwin brought about a number of revolutionary changes, and produced some of the finest English pipes of the period. In 1861 the works, then known as the "Broseley Pipe Works", employed 28 people, and in 1871 40 (Hannaford, 1992; Higgins, D, 1987, p141).

Edwin Southorn died in 1876, and in the late 1870s the factory was run by Hopkins & Co. as the Raleigh Tobacco Pipeworks. By 1882 the Southorn family seem to have taken charge of the site which continued to operate as the "Raleigh Pipe Works" and was said in 1885 to be one of the largest factories of its kind in England. Production on the site apparently ceased sometime between 1895 and 1909. The works, labelled as a "Pipe Works", are shown on the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey 25" maps of 1882 and 1902 as two parallel ranges of buildings joined with a kiln at their northern end. (Stamper, 1998, p254-5; Hayman & Horton, 1999, p91; OS, 1882 & 1902.)

Whether the works were abandoned or whether there is simply a gap in the records for the early 20th century is unclear. Much of the history for the site in the later 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries has been compiled from trade directories, and it may be that the Bridge Road works were operating under Southorn's "Broseley Pipe Works" from their address at the King Street works in Broseley. Whichever, from about 1922 Wolfson Rowe & Co., operating as the "Salop Pottery", was making earthenware on the Pitchyard site. On the 1927

OS 25" map, a second kiln is shown on the west side of the main factory buildings, as well as the kiln at the northern end. Between c. 1929 and 1937 the works were operated by the Leigh Pottery Co. Ltd. for the production of decorative wares. From the late 1930s the Benthall Stoneware Co made sanitary pipes at the works until the 1950s. Pottery production was also restarted here by a Stoke-on-Trent firm in about 1950, but this was a short-lived enterprise. The site is still shown as a "Pipe Works" on the 1954 OS 1:10,560 (6") map of 1954. (Benthall, 1957, p168-9; Clarke, 1993, p63; OS, 1927 & 1954; Stamper, 1998, p254-5.)

From 1959 until at least the late 1980s the site was used as a garage and chemical store. By 1973 the kilns had gone, though the east and west ranges of the former pottery buildings still stood. The remaining buildings were demolished in 2011. (Clark & Alfrey, 1987, p190; OS, 1973; Hannaford, 2012a.)



Pitchyard Pottery, Benthall

There have been several archaeological interventions on or in the immediate vicinity of the site. In the early 1950s finds were made in the gardens across the road from the works of slipware plates, dishes and drinking vessels "with crimped edges sometimes known as Welsh dishes". The slipware included pieces of a "fireclay body, covered with a red or brown slip which in turn was decorated with a white slip poured on with a slip kettle and quill or a comb of quills" (Benthall, 1957, p169). The area was included in the Nuffield Archaeological Survey of the late 1980s carried out by Ironbridge Institute. The two central units of the east range buildings were still relatively intact, though altered in the later 20th century. The west range had been partly demolished by this time, though some walls survived, and a chimney still stood against the west wall of this range. No kilns survived. (Clark and Alfrey, 1987, p190). In 1983 construction work for the garage on the pottery site revealed a large underground chamber. This was recorded by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Archaeology Unit (archive: Benthall, The New Inn, BE83B) and interpreted at the time as an old water cistern. 18th century clay pipes, earthenware pottery wasters and saggar fragments were also recovered. (Trueman, 1988, p29.) An archaeological watching brief was maintained on the demolition of the remaining structures on the Bridge Road site in 2011 (Hannaford, 2012a) and the remains of part of a 19th-century kiln floor were recorded, indirectly associated with deposits of industrial waste, including pottery wasters and kiln furniture during re-development of the site in 2012 (Hannaford, 2012b).

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- Hugh Hannaford, Senior Archaeological Projects Officer, Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council*

Shropshire Archives News July 2013

Digitisation and on line publication of records

Work on digitising parish registers and other records of interest to family historians is now complete. A procurement process is underway to find a commercial partner to make the parish and non conformist registers accessible on line through a subscription service. It is hoped contracts will be signed later in the summer with material going on line later in the year. We will keep you informed of progress.

Oswestry cemetery project

This 18 month project led by Oswestry Town Council and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund will work on the cataloguing, conservation and digitisation of the records of Oswestry cemetery dating back to 1862. The records, which are relatively complete, are currently in poor condition and inaccessible to researchers. The project will also support volunteers who will create a photographic record of the surviving gravestones, transcribe the information on them, and research the lives of those recorded to create an online resource. The oldest stone at the cemetery will also be conserved and interpretation added to the cemetery itself. Project staff are currently being recruited and work will start later in the summer.

Arts Council volunteering project

Shropshire Council has been successful in a bid to the Arts Council to support development work across museums and heritage services. Shropshire Archives will be most involved in an 18 month long 'Virtual Volunteering' project which will complement the Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage project now into its second year. The project will support volunteers who prefer to work on material at home whether for access or geographical reasons. Digital copies of archives and other heritage items will be created to support this work.

Thursday evening workshops

We have been very pleased with the response to our Thursday evening workshops which started in April. So far all the sessions have been fully booked with some very positive feedback from those taking part. We will be running further workshops later in the year, please look out for further details.

Alison Healey.

Alison, our longest standing member of staff, retired at the end of March. She worked for the service since 1968 in a number of roles including most recently as our genealogical researcher, so

she has seen many changes in archives and record offices over the years. Alison was always the person we asked when faced with an enquiry or questions we thought no one else would know the answer to. Her research work and delivery of courses and training for staff has benefited so many people in Shropshire and across the world. We will all miss her helpfulness and professionalism.

Whitchurch History Day

Saturday 12th October sees the Whitchurch History Day, jointly organised by the Friends of the Shropshire Archives and the Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage project. This is going to be a day of celebration about the town's heritage and that of its hinterland. Expect talks, presentations, music, historic walks and tours. The venue is Brownlow Community Centre, Claypit Street, Whitchurch SY13 1LF. More information from john.benson@shropshire.gov.uk 01743 255377.

Friends annual lecture

7.30pm Wednesday 13 November at Shropshire Archives, Matt Williams (ex Time Team) details tbc

Mary McKenzie, Shropshire Archives

Shropshire Museums Service:

working towards a new museum for Shrewsbury

With work progressing at the new Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery, staff have started to move collections out of Rowley's House. Most of the natural science and social history collections which will not be displayed are now being added to the study collections at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre and the archaeology archives from fieldwork around the town are being moved off-site.

We will soon be at the point where we will have to start closing galleries to pack up the exhibits and have some professionally cleaned or conserved but we hope to keep this closure period as short as possible. We are still on track to open the new Museum at the end of the year and are looking forward to seeing both old favourites redisplayed to their best advantage and new items on display for the first time.

To find out more about the new museum visit our website www.shrewsburymuseum.org.uk Up-to-date news is also posted on our Facebook page www.facebook.com/shrewsbury.museum, Pinterest board <http://pinterest.com/shropmuseums> and twitter account [@shropmuseums](https://twitter.com/shropmuseums)

Emma-Kate Lanyon, Shropshire Museums Service

Notes from the finds desk of the PAS:

Archaeological artefacts from Shropshire have been coming into the museum at a steady rate since the last newsletter, which is surprising given the snow, then rains and now full blown heat wave. I have picked one of my favourite newly discovered objects for this newsletter's PAS roundup

Enamelled heraldic pendant from Horse Harness discovered in Waters Upton, North East Shropshire (PAS record: HESH-C85A60)

The pendant is generally well preserved although the edges are abraded eroded and corroded. From the centre of the top edge of the pendant an integral cast suspension loop, this would have been attached to a mount allowing the pendant to swing. The front face of the pendant has an inlaid white enamel design of a moth or butterfly with outstretched wings. The design is well achieved and relatively in scale - filling the entire front face. Small traces of gilt surface is present on the area outside the white butterfly - suggesting that the entire front face was gilt and that the butterfly was shown on a field of gold.



enamelled heraldic pendant

Heraldically this emblazoned shield can be described *Argent Butterfly volant en aiere on field or*. The device is linked with the Audley family who used the device as a familial badge (rather than their heraldic badge). The butterflies can be seen on the battle pennon of the Audley family which was flown at the Battle of Blore Heath (1459) (during the War of the Roses) where James Turchet (Lord Audley) fell in battle. At this time the Audley family had many lands in Staffordshire, Cheshire and North Shropshire. The findspot of this example is near to Blore Heath - although predates the battle by at least 150 years. The symbol of the butterfly in medieval thought is often linked with the psyche or soul - the colour white (argent / blanche) is also know for purity. Other harness pendants have been recorded with moths or butterflies similar to this - interestingly this holds a distribution associated with the landholdings of the Audley family - with a small concentration in Cheshire / North Shropshire. A further example has also been discovered at the excavations of a monastic site at Poulton, Cheshire.

The full PAS record can be found here

<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/549351>

Peter Reavill

Portable Antiquities Scheme

Ludlow Museum Resource Centre, July 2013

Bitterley Hoard Appeal.

The Bitterley coin hoard dates from the English Civil War and was deposited at some point after July 1643. It is the largest civil war hoard found in Shropshire in modern times. 'Shropshire Museums / Ludlow Museum' and 'The Friends of Ludlow Museum' are currently raising money to acquire the hoard, fully clean and conserve it and display it within the County.



Bitterley Hoard – Close up of Hoard in the ground

The hoard consists of 137 high denomination silver coins and a single gold one. These were discovered by a metal detectorist on farm land near Bitterley, on the slopes of Clee Hill, South Shropshire. The detectorist reported the hoard within hours of its discovery and had resisted the urge to excavate it himself. This allowed staff of the Portable Antiquities Scheme to excavate and lift the hoard thereby preserving any internal stratigraphy. The hoard was excavated at the British Museum and fully catalogued. We now know that the hoard was originally placed within a very fine leather purse which had then been pushed into a blackware pottery tyg (multi-handed drinking vessel) and buried in the ground at a depth of c. 14 inches. The coins date from the reigns of Edward VI - Charles I with the youngest coin being a Bristol Mint Half Crown struck between July 1643 and March 1644. The face value of the hoard is £9 11s 6d.



*Bitterley Hoard – Charles 1
Bristol Mint copy*

If you are able to make a contribution toward the preservation of this hoard for the people of Shropshire then please contact Lottie James, Chair of Friends of Ludlow Museum - 01584 872685 lottie_james@btinternet.com or you can make a contribution to their online fund which can be found here:

www.justgiving.com/friendsofludlow/Donate

Full details of the discovery, excavation and investigation of the hoard can be found here:

www.dayofarchaeology.com/author/preavill/

Peter Reavill, Portable Antiquities Scheme

The work of Heritage at Risk Project Officers (HARPOs) in Shropshire:

Caus Castle: a case study

Following an extensive restructuring over the last 12 months, English Heritage has come through its metamorphosis with a team of dedicated professionals working to combat the threats to our designated heritage assets (scheduled monuments, listed buildings, parks and gardens) with archaeologists, historic buildings advisers, architects and landscape architects all collaborating to safeguard the heritage values of such places, i.e. what makes them significant.

The Heritage at Risk Project Officers (HARPOs) work with local authorities, private landowners, community groups and others to examine ways of lowering the risk status of heritage assets across the region. They will advise on where to apply for funding, day to day management and longer term management agreements or other improvement strategies that will help assets to achieve low risk status.

The Heritage at Risk Register (published annually) provides a list enabling HARPOs to prioritise assets that need the most help and target assets which are at risk of being lost either partially or in their entirety to deterioration, aggressive agricultural practice, lack of funds or other threats. By working with partner organisations such as Natural England, funds can be channelled into management of rural monuments, supporting the natural and historic environments that make up our beloved countryside. One of the aims of this, alongside safeguarding the future of such assets, is to facilitate and enhance the enjoyment and understanding of these sites.

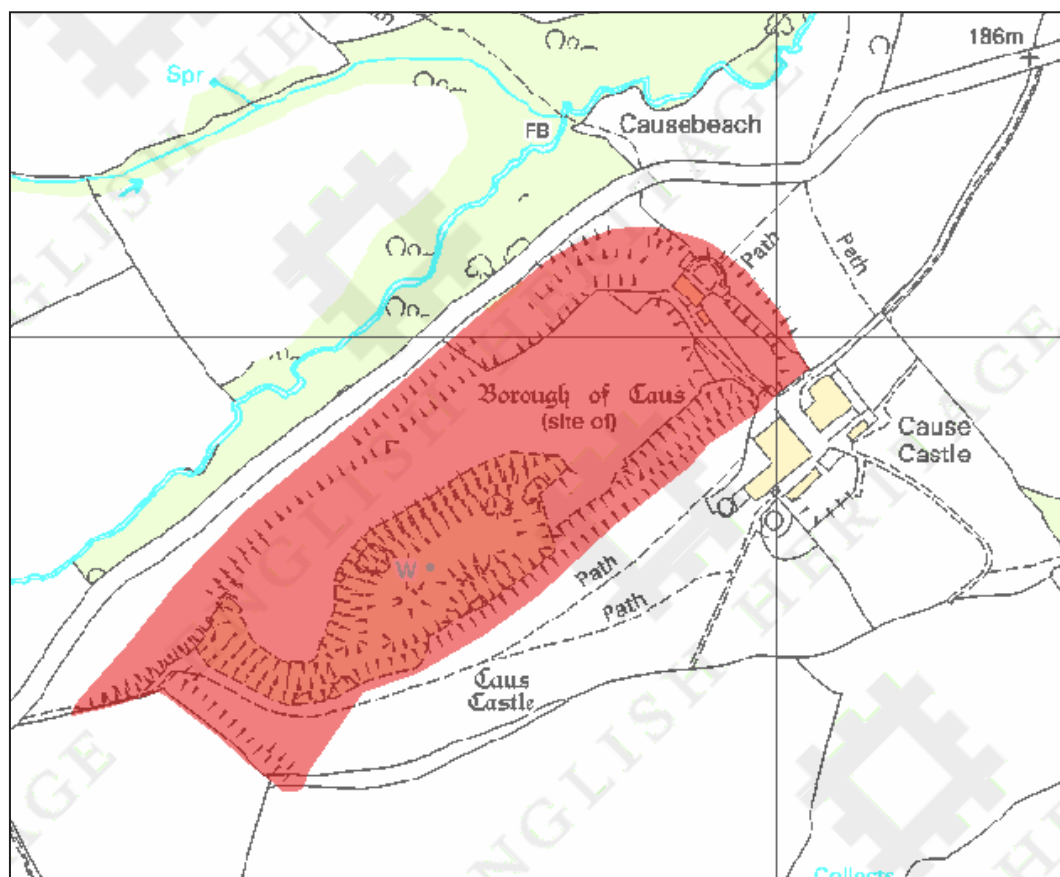
A current example of this partnership working, and a splendid heritage asset quite prominent in the Shropshire countryside, is Caus Castle near Westbury. This site is a small multivallate hillfort, with a motte and bailey castle inside it, all within a medieval borough; a truly fantastic example of British pre-history and medieval history rolled into one. The size of the area enclosed by the Iron Age ramparts around the hill make it one of only around 100 such sites recognised nationally. The post-conquest motte and bailey which sits upon the hill top and extends its natural altitude by several metres would have been surmounted by a palisade and a timber (and later stone) tower; it is thought to have been constructed by Roger Fitz Corbet, a marcher lord, in the late 11th to early 12th century, as the 'caput' (the principal residence, military base and administrative centre) of his barony. This is not much of a stretch as Caus takes its name from the Pays de Caux area of Normandy, the ancestral home of Roger Fitz Corbet. The hillfort was evidently reused in medieval times and comprised a strong communal as well as military focal point for the surrounding settlements. Further information on Caus Castle's history is available under its scheduling description.

The monument had fallen into slow decline, principally due to serious tree root damage of the masonry footings which resulted in crumbling and loose wall footings. English Heritage liaised with Natural England as the monument became the focus of a Higher Level Stewardship application and, now under stewardship, a programme of measures is being discussed along with a local forester and Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Team to manage issues on the monument. In terms of the site's enjoyment, there is a lack of visibility and stable vegetation cover at ground level; self seeding saplings and trees grow up on the site but a meeting with a forester has led to a strategic plan to manage the worst area of scrub regeneration in the centre of the bailey around the base of the motte. Although there is no right of way on the monument, this will hopefully mean that local walkers and residents will be able to see more of the site from distant views and appreciate its setting in this archaeologically-rich and significant area.

The site of the monument is shown on the attached map extract.

It includes a 2 metre boundary around the archaeological features, considered to be essential for the monument's support and preservation.

Imogen Sambrook | Heritage at Risk Project Officer
English Heritage | The Axis | 10
Holliday Street | Birmingham |
B1 1TG
www.english-heritage.org.uk



Beneath the forest

A few years ago, the Forestry Commission undertook a major project in the Wyre Forest. Part of this was to examine the history of the forest. The one substantial outcome was an aerial archaeological survey of the forest, using the (then) new technique of LiDAR.

Aerial surveys, using photographs taken from aeroplanes, has been used in archaeology for almost a century; indeed there are 19th century photographs taken from hot air balloons. Today of course it is a trivial matter to get hold of any aerial photograph from Google Earth; in the correct lighting these can give excellent images of archaeological features, including old mines. However, there is an obvious problem in using aerial photography to look at woodland; the photos simply show the tops of trees. This is particularly unfortunate, as woodland tends to preserve earthworks much better than open country, where they are likely to have been ploughed out. LiDAR is a way round this. The technique involves firing laser pulses from the aircraft at the ground and recording the time it takes for them to bounce back and return to the plane. If the laser pulse hits an elevated feature, it will take a shorter time to return to the detector than if it is reflected by a depression. LiDAR works in woodland because the laser beams are so focused that they can pass between the branches of trees to hit the ground, so it is possible to see beneath the canopy. The technique can distinguish between features that differ in height by only a few inches and that are around a foot or so in diameter.

The initial output is a very detailed contour map. This is normally visualised by feeding the co-ordinates back into a computer and then creating an image that would be produced by the sun shining over the landscape from any given direction. Typically, images will be created showing the illumination from the four points of the compass; by comparing these, it is possible to build up a full picture of the landscape. Of course, not every feature that is shown on LiDAR is of great interest; a mound might be a tip from a small mine or quarry; it could also be a pile of logs or sawdust. Thus it is necessary to walk over the survey area on foot to identify exactly what has been found.

After some delay, the results of the Wyre Forest LiDAR survey are now available on-line. The resolution is not as high as the data still held by the Forestry Commission and the images only show illumination from one direction, so some features are invisible. None-the-less, the images that are available show the majority of archaeological features in sufficient detail for most purposes. One of the most spectacular set of images is of an enclosure around Lower Kingswood Farm in Kinlet at SO734770. This may mark a medieval manorial enclosure or correspond to a small deer park known from contemporary documents.

However, a number of 19th century antiquarians recorded what would seem to have been an Iron Age fort at Kingswood. In recent times it has not been possible to identify the structure that they saw; however the LiDAR images suggest that it may have been this enclosure and it is possible that it may indeed be prehistoric in origin. The technique has also been used recently, with great success, to map the Roman fort at Walltown (Clebury Mortimer) and its environs.

LiDAR is an expensive technique. However, it is widely used by the Environment Agency to map streams and rivers and their data sets are steadily growing. Thus LiDAR images will become more common and accessible and they will be of great use to archaeologists.

David Poyner

Berwick House and Chapel: new light.

The late Professor Andor Gomme attributed the design of Berwick House to Francis Smith of Warwick and identified fine carving there as the work of Smith's in-house carver, Edward Poynton. The client was Thomas Powys, a member of the Shrewsbury Draper's Company and merchant. At much the same time as the house was building Berwick Chapel, built in 1672, was refurbished and provided with a baroque tower. The normally quoted date is 1735. Gomme ascribes the tower to the Trubshaw's, a Staffordshire family of masons. In the formal garden of the house there was a fine wrought-iron screen and gates which were transferred to Newnham Paddox, Warwickshire in the later 19th century. The wrought-iron communion rails in the chapel were probably by the same hand. Both have been ascribed either to the Davies family, gatesmiths of Wrexham or to Robert Bakewell of Derby who was occasionally employed by Smith.

The discovery of accounts for the refurbishment of the chapel starting in 1729 sheds new light. Most of the craftsmen were local, Shrewsbury, men. However, Edward Poynton was paid for carving an altarpiece and this connects the refurbishment firmly with Francis Smith. The wrought-iron communion rails were supplied by the gatesmith Robert Bakewell of Derby who must now become the preferred gatesmith for the wrought-iron screen and gates formerly in the garden. The architectural framework of the altarpiece, the gallery and pews were made by William White a Shrewsbury joiner. The masons for the tower, paid for in December 1737, were Thomas Gates and a Mr. Webb. The area within the communion rails was paved with "Worcestershire" marble; a type of stone as yet unidentified. The altarpiece was superseded during the "restoration" of 1892. *(A longer note will appear in TSAHS).*

(Sources: GlamRO/CL/Deeds2/6439; Cranage, *Churches*, (1912), 847-8; Newman, *Buildings of Shropshire*, (2006), 847-8; Gomme, *Smith of Warwick*, (2000), pp., 19, 185-6, 288-9)

James Lawson

News from Old Oswestry Landscape and Archaeology Project (OOLAP)

Old Oswestry Hillfort

Now is an excellent time to visit Old Oswestry, one of the most impressive Iron Age hillforts in Britain yet very easy to access from Llwyn Road or from the Gatacre playing fields. With views to the Cheshire ridge, the Wrekin and down the Welsh border, with massive ramparts and a unique and enigmatic array of steep sided pits it offers a challenge to the interpretive skills of the archaeologist. It's also a wonderful place for children to run around freely and explore the past.

The site is a haven for wildlife including some rare plants, all three native species of newts, and linnets, skylarks, and yellow hammers. The latter species has declined nationally by more than 50% over the last 25 years and is now on the Red List of birds of high conservation concern.



Yellowhammer at Old Oswestry hillfort (Rodney Farmer)



Old Oswestry hillfort: ramparts near western entrance. The broom bushes (dark green) provide habitat for Greater Broomrape

The hillfort retains a timeless feel despite the ever encroaching presence of the town. Views to the west and north have perhaps not changed substantially from those of three thousand years ago, but to the south east the bypass and the buildings of the expanding town have a major impact. Now Shropshire Council's latest Site Allocations and Management Development (SAMdev) plans imply even more development in this area. Details can be viewed at www.shropshire.gov.uk/samdev_

If you are interested in the future of the hillfort, and you would like to join in activities including liaising with English Heritage and monitoring the management of the site please contact OOLAP, email heather.hidden@btinternet.com.

Heather Hidden (OOLAP)

OOLAP seminar 2013

For the past six years OOLAP has organised an annual seminar tracing the development of the Northern Marches from Prehistory onwards. Seminar number seven - **1066 and all that...** will take place on Saturday 26th October 2013 from 10.00am to 4.00pm at the Marches School, Morda Road, Oswestry. Further details and a booking form (tickets are £10.00 each to include a sandwich lunch and morning and afternoon refreshments) can be obtained from:

Heather Hidden, Wern Weston Cottage, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, SY10 7LJ E: heather.hidden@btinternet.com

Corbet(t) family research: linking Shropshire and Ireland?

I have always loved coincidences and the way so many things in life seem to have links between them. I have spent the last year exploring as many lines of enquiry about the Corbett family as possible to give me a golden thread by which to explore the history and geography of these islands.

My father's family line comes from Tipperary in Ireland and I have discovered that, in one small part of that county, there are dozens of Corbett families. In fact the name seems to be concentrated in Tipperary, Limerick and Clare. Then, much to my surprise, I discovered that the Corbets were also a significant family here in Norfolk.

I had always known that Shropshire was the post-Norman Corbet land and that it was likely that most strands of the family name originated from Shropshire families. I finally tracked down The Family of Corbet: its life and times (A E B Corbet, 1915) which

traces the Caus, Wattlesborough and Moreton Corbet lines of the family and its spread from Shropshire. I noted that the second volume of the book was dedicated to Sir Roland Corbet (Coldstream Guards and killed at Givenchy in 1915). Then, as I explored the life of my grandfather and his three years in France during the Great War, I discovered that he had left Ireland and spent the whole war period in the Irish and then Machine Gun Guards. He was wounded in France and ended up in hospital at Ellesmere in Shropshire not many miles from Moreton Corbet! So I have spent some time in beautiful Shropshire to explore the land of my ancestors and I want to see if I can find any formal link between the Shropshire Corbetts and why the Corbett name emerged in South West Ireland. As Augusta Corbet put it in her history:

'A good deal has still to be discovered also among the generations of younger sons in the Houses of Leigh and Longnor before their loss of the male line. The same may also be pointed out with regard to the descendants of younger sons in the Norfolk branch, with the clearing up of the vexed question of their descent...Again, a fertile field for research may be found in Ireland where many a Corbet family settled in the troubled days of Cromwell and following years. The name is constantly found both in the North and South of Ireland'

It is this that has given me a focus for my research. I am interested in making contact with anyone with an insight into the Corbet family line. My main hypothesis at present is that the Shropshire Corbets provided military officers and men during the Tudor and, especially, Elizabethan campaigns in Ireland and it is probably from those soldiers that the Irish line emerged with the name apparently taking a local form (Corbain). During the 18th and 19th centuries Corbain is the closest equivalent Irish surname to Corbett and it seems that all later Corbains eventually anglicised their names to Corbett.

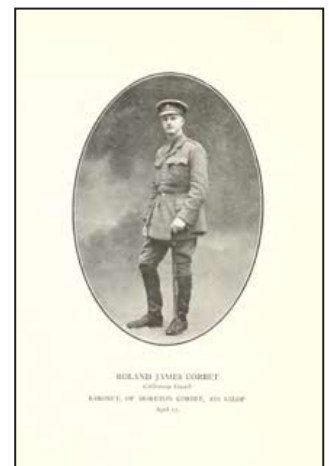
I would love to meet and / or hear from anyone with research interests that cover Tudor / Elizabethan Shropshire, the men and families that migrated from Shropshire to Ireland and also any research that has been done into the Corbet family.

Fred Corbett, 64 Naseby Way, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk, NR7 0TP

Tel: 01603 432976. E: frederick.corbett@virginmedia.com



Sgt. Edmond (Edward) Corbett DCM: my grandfather



Sir Roland James Corbet

Update: watchmen's huts on the Lilleshall Company Railways

In our last issue we published an appeal, by Shane Kelleher of the Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust, for information about possible surviving examples of these huts or for photographs of destroyed examples. Shane has been able to provide us with a photograph of a now demolished watchman's hut which stood on Wellington Road, Donnington. Does anyone remember the location of any other such huts or know what they were used for?

Information to Shane Kelleher at E: ironbridge.archaeology@gmail.com or on Tel: 01952 435900.



Book News

It has been suggested that we should follow the example of the *Woolhope Naturalists Field Club* and include a section in the Newsletter giving brief details of recent publications of local interest. Obviously, many of the titles included will later be reviewed in the *Transactions* but short bibliographical details in the Newsletter will bring material of interest to the attention of members much more quickly.

The following three volumes are all recent publications relating to Shropshire:

Bryant, Richard (2012): *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, Volume X: the Western Midlands*. (Oxford: OUP/The British Academy)

(Covers Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire: price £95.00)

Gelling, Margaret (2012): *The Place-names of Shropshire: Part 6 – the hundreds of Brimstree and Bradford South*. (Nottingham: English Place-Name Society)

(When Margaret Gelling died in 2009 only five of a proposed eight volumes covering Shropshire place-names had been published. However, part 6 was largely complete and has now been published by the EPNS with just a few minor additions and amendments. It is available to Society members for the special price of £35.00 (post-free). Further details from the Newsletter editor. It is hoped that parts 7 and 8 can be completed by members of Margaret's team and published eventually.

White, R H, Gaffney, C & Gaffney V L with Baker, A (2013): *Wroxeter, the Cornovii and the Urban Process: Final Report on the Wroxeter Hinterland project 1994-1997. Volume 2: Characterising the City*. (Oxford: Archaeopress)

(The final volume covering the completion of this monumental enterprise. A snip at £15.50)

If you come across any publication that you consider ought to be included in the next edition of this bibliography please contact the Newsletter editor.

Newsletter Development

The editor welcomes contributions from individual members and organisations.

In future issues we hope to include brief biographies of distinguished antiquarians and archaeologists with a link to Shropshire. We also plan to highlight various finds from the county, recorded in the past, and now 'lost' (but we hope not gone forever). We will be launching this series in the next issue with a review of the story of the Bagley shield.

Suggestions for subjects / topics in either category – and ideas for any other material members would like to see covered should be sent to the editor (contact details below).

Copy deadline for the Spring 2014 Newsletter is Friday 28th February 2014. Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter editor at 7 Elstree Close, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9QF or emailed to shelagh228@msn.com



SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Shropshire
Archaeological
and
Historical
Society
No. 77, Spring 2014

Website: <http://www.shropshirearchaeology.org.uk>

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SOCIETY NEWS

AGM: The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the Society will be held at The Shirehall, Shrewsbury on Saturday 20th September 2014 at 9.30am. The AGM will be followed, at 10.20am, by the **Roman Shropshire Day School**. With a wide-ranging programme this meeting will provide a review of the latest research into Shropshire during the Roman period. Places are available at the very reasonable cost of £15.00 which includes lunch and afternoon tea. Further information and a booking slip can be found at the bottom of the enclosed **Meetings Programme** leaflet.

Subscriptions and Mailings: We are constantly exploring ways which will enable us to maintain, or improve on, our current level of activities while ensuring the financial stability of the Society. At the AGM, held on 14th September 2013, it was agreed that the annual subscription would have to be increased, from 1st January 2015, to reflect our rising costs.

The new rates will be:

individual subscriptions:	£19.00
family subscriptions:	£20.00

A letter from the Treasurer is enclosed with this Newsletter. One way in which members who are UK taxpayers can assist the Society financially, at no extra cost to themselves, is by filling in a Gift Aid Declaration Form to cover their membership subscriptions. A new Gift Aid Declaration Form is enclosed with this Newsletter and the Treasurer has contributed the following note:

Please note:

Because of the important additional information enclosed with this Newsletter it is being posted as hard copy to *all* members. If you normally receive your Newsletter by email you will still receive your electronic copy (in colour) as usual.

Gift Aid and member-benefits

The government Gift Aid scheme allows us to reclaim tax on members' subscriptions. Recently, however, H.M.R.C. has made more stringent rules for Gift Aid claims, particularly in relation to member-benefits. A result of this is that the Society cannot claim Gift Aid on a subscription if that member has enjoyed a member-benefit that year – such as privileged-price entry to events organized by the Society. Besides reducing the Society's income member-benefits also make the Gift Aid scheme very complicated to administer. The Council has therefore reluctantly decided that it is no longer possible to offer privileged member-benefits at its events. This will not mean that members will be charged more, simply that we are no longer able to charge non-members at a discriminatory rate.

Dr. Fran Bumpus (Treasurer, SAHS)

Meetings Group: The Society's **Meetings Group** is still looking for any members who would like to assist with the development of the Society's events programme. The Group meets informally to discuss possible events and lecture topics – the task is not onerous and provides an opportunity for the wider membership to contribute to the Society's activities. If you would like to help please contact the Newsletter editor.

Alternatively, if you have an idea for an event or lecture topic but do not feel able to give up the time to attend meetings feel free to send your suggestion, by post or email, to the editor who will pass it on (contact details at head of page).

STOP PRESS

**The new Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery is opening on Tuesday 1st April.
It will be open 7 days a week from 10.00am - 5.00pm**

Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery: Latest update

At the time of going to press (4th March 2014) the opening date has still not been announced but Shropshire Museum staff and volunteers are currently undertaking the final stages to complete Shrewsbury's new Museum and Art Gallery which is due to open in the next few weeks. Cases are being dressed, paintings being hung and captions written for the thousand or more items which will be on display to the public.



Bones from the 'Conover mammoth' on display in Shrewsbury for the first time

This month saw a visit from British Museum staff to install the Berth Cauldron: a remarkable Late Iron Age find from Shropshire which will be on display in the county for the first time in over 100 years. "I am thrilled that we have been able to arrange this loan with the trustees of the British Museum." says Emma-Kate Lanyon, Team Leader (Collections and Curatorial Services). "This is one of the key items I had hoped to secure for display as it tells an important story about society just before and after the Roman invasion. It was breath-taking to see it for real for the first time as it was carefully lifted out of its packing crate."



A view of one of the new galleries in preparation

By allowing key items to come home other nationals, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum who will continue to loan the late sixteenth century Corbet Bed for display, are also supporting the project and adding to the quality of the exhibitions. "This has been possible for the first time as the new museum provides the strict environmental conditions and security required by these museums to lend such important objects." says Emma-Kate.

Local people and those with a connection to the county have also rallied round the project. "We have some very notable loans from private individuals" says Emma-Kate. "These include the supposed scaffold cloth from the execution of Charles I and one of Shrewsbury astronomer Henry Blunt's ground-breaking nineteenth century models of the surface of the moon." Local people have also been generous in making some significant donations including raising funds to purchase a fine watercolour of Fish Street by the leading nineteenth century water-colourist John Varley and the largest known Roman coin hoard to have been found in Shropshire. Individual gifts have ranged from a collection of medieval artefacts from Tong Castle, a unique Caughley porcelain double handled sauceboat and a fine portrait by James Canterbury Pardon. Members may also be interested to hear that the museum is starting to fundraise to purchase a fine early medieval gold ring from South Shropshire which has been valued at over £3,500.00. The museum would love to keep it in Shropshire and in the public domain but, in order to do so, will need to raise a substantial part of the purchase price.



Roman tombstones from Wroxeter

"We cannot thank people enough for their support" says Emma-Kate. "The quality of the displays at the new museum is due to the generosity of local people who for over 180 years have helped us to build up a remarkable collection. Without their help we could not tell the story of our county's rich natural heritage and history."

Emma-Kate Lanyon, Shropshire Museum Service

Notes from the finds desk of the PAS

Time flies when you are having fun!

2014 marks my tenth year as the Counties Finds Liaison Officer working for the British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme. Over the years I have been amazed at some of the finds reported to me and it has been a real privilege to handle and record them. Some of the most important have been acquired by the Museum Service – and I looking forward to seeing many of them displayed within the new Museum and Art Gallery – which will open very soon – at the old Music Hall in Shrewsbury town centre.

However, the majority of finds I work with remain with the finders or landowners who reported them in the first place. So I thought in this newsletter I would highlight three recently recorded discoveries which have been returned to the people who found them. Many other important artefacts from the county can be seen on the PAS database – www.finds.org.uk – so if you have a spare half hour (after reading the rest of this issue) please do take a look

A fob, hanger or dangler of later Iron Age Date from the Baschurch Area (PAS record HESH-D89587)

Archaeologists are unsure of the function of this type of artefact – most ascribe them to be a form of harness decoration that hangs or dangles although an example has been recovered associated with a grave from Kingsholm in Gloucestershire. The fob is formed from a cast copper alloy and dates to the late Iron Age (pre-Roman) date (100BC - AD 80). The fob is incomplete being broken across the projecting shank extending from the centre of the reverse; this break is old and patinated and the surface is unworn. Due to the break the shank and perforated loop is lost. The dangler is well cast with a circular disc / head which is augmented with an incised and pierced decoration. The overall form is that of an openwork threefold triskelle or whirligig. The whirligig is formed around a central cast raised circular boss with a cup-shaped central depression. The exterior edge of this boss is further delineated / enclosed by a deeply incised groove. The three defined arms are well modelled; each arm is cast slightly thickened. This additional thickness is enhanced by the arm being slightly twisted, bent away, giving the whirligig a three dimensional form - and the leading edge of each arm motion and definition. The entire disc is bordered by a very finely incised circumferential groove which defines the internal design and forms a neat external edge. Interestingly the reverse is also marked with areas of fine traced lines. These incised lines are very shallow and probably mark the mapping out of the design by the original bronze smith / craftsmen. The marks are very similar to those seen in



the openwork on the front - being crescent / comma shaped - although they are of varying sizes and so do not correspond directly with the design. It is likely that they have been applied with a compass and possibly functioned either as an initial failed motif / test design, or they helped the craftsman proportion the design on the front. The fob is a deep greenish brown colour with a well formed and preserved polished surface patina.

The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/599015>

A Roman plate brooch from the Hinstock Area (PAS record HESH-93EAD7)

An incomplete cast copper alloy disc or wheel brooch dating to the Roman period, (circa AD 250-370). Approximately 95% of the brooch survives, although it has lost its pin and catchplate. In form it is sub-circular in plan with



a distinctive central domed projection from which six radiating ribs extend; the design resembles the hub and spokes of a wheel. The central dome is unusually riveted through the plate. Small areas of gilding survive on the decorative band and the central decoration. There are very few examples of these brooches (less than 20) are known from Britain and for Shropshire this form of brooch is very late – with the majority of brooches recorded by the PAS being from the period AD 75 – 200

The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/582630>

Sceatta / Early Medieval Coin from the Albrighton Area PAS record: HESH-0FD355

This is only the fourth early Saxon Sceatta to be recorded by the PAS from Shropshire – and there are less than 10 known from the county. Therefore this



example is a very important addition to our knowledge of the period. It is probably a contemporary copy and dates to the period AD c.680-710 – most probably being made between AD 695 – 700. The front face shows a diadem-crowned king's head facing right with the partial nonsensical inscription [...]VIINOOAV[...]. The reverse face shows a bird sitting right on a cross with an annulet at the end of each horizontal arm. The broad distribution of these coins, like all metalwork finds for this period, favours the north and east of the county.

The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/583339>

Peter Reavill : peter.reavill@shropshire.gov.uk
Portable Antiquities Scheme : Ludlow Museum Resource Centre
March 2014

Shropshire Archives News Feb 2014

Service review

Shropshire Archives is currently undergoing a service review in order to meet the planned budget reductions set by Shropshire Council for the next three years. Due to the very difficult financial position Shropshire Council finds itself in, there will inevitably be an impact on the level of services we can continue to provide. Once consultation with staff and other stakeholders is complete, a public consultation will also take place during mid February to March. Please look out for details on our website and at Shropshire Archives and local libraries.

On line publishing

Shropshire Archives has entered into partnership with Brightsolid who run the Find My Past website. Shropshire parish and non conformist registers dating up to 1900 will be on line in the spring and available on a subscription basis. Free access will be available at Shropshire Archives and at all Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin libraries. We will let you know when we have a more definite date for the release of the records.

Records, archive and museum store

Many of you will be aware that space for the storage of materials at Shropshire Archives has been very tight for a number of years. I am therefore very pleased to tell you that capital funding from Shropshire Council has been secured to convert an existing Council-owned warehouse unit to provide a combined record, archive and museum store. This will provide a suitable environment for archives storage and will meet the necessary national standards. The store will also provide space for Shropshire Council records needing to be kept for a limited period as part of the Records Management Service, and also for some museum collections that cannot be accommodated in the new Museum and Art Gallery at the Music Hall in Shrewsbury. Work on the new store has now started and should be complete by April.

Shropshire World War One Commemorations

Shropshire Archives is working with a wide range of county wide arts and heritage organisations to develop projects and activities to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War. Funding has been granted by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England to support this activity from 2014 to 2016. We will keep you informed of progress.

Mary McKenzie, Shropshire Archives

News from Shropshire's Historic Environment Record team (the HER)

First edition Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 Historic (County Series) Maps Available online.

The late 19th century First edition Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 historic maps for Shropshire are now available online via the British History Online website (www.british-history.ac.uk). The facility provides you with an overview of the county from which you can select an individual map sheet, and allows you to zoom in and out, and move around the map sheet. Associated information includes the map sheet number and publication date.

From the homepage, use the Map tab to select Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 - Epoch 1 from the drop down list, and then select Shropshire. From the index map, click on the map sheet you want to view.

The map sheet will open. Clicking on a part of the sheet takes you in at maximum zoom (MAX). To zoom out, click on HIGH, LOW or MIN (Full sheet).

Charlotte Orchard, Shropshire HER.

Map Search and 20th Century Mapping on the Discovering Shropshire's History website

The Discovering Shropshire's History website, www.shropshirehistory.org.uk has now been enhanced with a range of mapping layers and the opportunity to browse and search via the map.

Click on Advanced Search.(Just below the Search box along the top.)

Click on Maps.

A Map will open with the "Our Collections" tab active and centred on the centre of the county. The map will fill up with markers for records, most of them HER records because all HER records contain spatial data. You can pan to the area you want and zoom in with the slider control, or with the Shift button held down, you can draw a box to zoom in with.

Click on any one of the markers to see the record's title. Click on the title to open up the full record.

There is a text search box on the left hand side just under "Our Collections" which you can use to move to a particular location by typing in a postcode.

When you are zoomed in to about a 1:10000 scale, photos will appear scattered over the map. Click on one of these to see the photograph and the record it relates to.

The default Base Map is “Open Street Map”, but click on the “Base Layers” tab for a wide range of options.

For access to a range of 20th Century Maps to overlay the base mapping, click on the “NLS Historic Maps” tab. These comprise three sets of 1 inch to 1 mile maps: 1920s, 1945-1947, and 1955 -1961, plus 1:25,000 (2 ½ inches to a mile) maps, dating from 1937-1961. These are all provided by the National Library of Scotland (NLS). You have the option to make the 20th century map semi-transparent so that you can see the Base Map underneath.

Penny Ward, Shropshire HER

HER Reloaded on the Discovering Shropshire’s History website.

The original mechanism for loading and reloading the Historic Environment Record (HER, aka the Sites and Monuments Record or SMR) records onto DSH was convoluted and fragile, and as a result many of the records have not been refreshed for years, and the records created in the last few years have not been available at all.

Early this year, a new system for loading the HER records onto DSH came into use, and this has enabled us to reload the site not only with up to date copies of our Monument Records, but also with our “Event” records. The presentation of the records has also been improved. As the new system is much simpler and direct, and can now be carried out entirely by the HER staff, we aim to refresh our data as often as we can, so that the online version of the HER is much closer to the master database.

Penny Ward, Shropshire HER

Adding Images to the Shropshire HER records on Discovering Shropshire’s History

We now have the facility to add images to HER records on DSH. This involves adding the photo’s date and Ref No and copyright to the image, saving it at a suitable size for the web (max 600 pixels and about 100kb), and then adding a link to the file from the relevant HER record.

The HER records are then reloaded to DSH with that link embedded and the DSH photos are then uploaded to the DSH image server. The images then appear on the map and embedded in the HER record.

Here is an example of a CPAT (Chris Musson) air photo :-

http://search.shropshirehistory.org.uk/collections/getrecord/CCS_MSA13217/

This is an example of a Milestone image, one of many which have been added by a volunteer from the Milestone Society.

http://search.shropshirehistory.org.uk/collections/getrecord/CCS_MSA23737/

The HER has hundreds of digital images and many thousands of film negatives and colour slides of sites and buildings recorded on the HER. We therefore have the potential to greatly enrich the online HER records with images.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help with this we would very much like to hear from you. It might be possible for you to do the preparation of digital images part of the work from the comfort of your own home PC.

Penny Ward, Shropshire HER

E: Penny.a.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01743 252558

Notes from the Chair of the Council for British Archaeology West Midlands Group

As this is the first newsletter communication since our AGM in July, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself and to talk a little bit about the West Midlands' group plans for the coming months. Many of you will have been in touch with me over the last few years, providing articles for our flagship publication West Midlands Archaeology. This year I will hand over copy of my last journal as Editor and while I've enjoyed producing this, most recently with a team of trusty sub-editors, I will be pleased to hand over the reins to Deborah Fox, in order to concentrate more fully on my role as Chair. Thank you to everyone who has provided material for this over the years.



CBAWM Dayschool held at The Guildhall, Worcester

By day, I work for Worcester City Council as Historic Environment Record Officer, looking after the archaeological and historic buildings data for the City.

This involves a lot of work around data management, responding to enquiries, but most interestingly for me, engaging with local people and making the historic environment more accessible to the communities that live within it. This might be through recording projects involving volunteers or even through new technologies and communication channels, such as social media, of which I confess to being a huge fan! Most rewarding for me, is the work that I'm involved with as co-leader of the Worcestershire Young Archaeologists' Club, who this year are celebrating their 10th anniversary.

My focus for the coming months will be on producing a strategy for the group, which I hope our membership will be involved with shaping. Key for me, in my role as Chair, is to ensure that we facilitate communication between members, local groups and societies, and archaeological services across the region. By enabling a forum for discussion, I hope we will be able to open up opportunities for participation, education and collaborative working, and will therefore be writing to you to ask for your comments and ideas in the very near future. I look forward to working with you all!

Sheena Payne-Lunn

Sheena.paynelunn@worcester.gov.uk

Twitter: @sheenapaynelunn

A Year of Community Archaeology in the Ironbridge Gorge

At the beginning of April 2013 I began a year's training placement in community archaeology at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust. My placement, which is funded by the Council of British Archaeology, is one of a number of appointments across the country with fellow trainees placed with organisations such as the National Trust and CADW, local authorities such as Somerset County Council, and museums including the National Museum Wales and National Museums Liverpool. The aim of the placement is to provide holders with the skills and experience required to pursue a career in community archaeology following the end of their term.



Samantha leading a guided walk in June 2013

During my time at Ironbridge I have been involved with a variety of projects which have engaged volunteers and participants with the industrial archaeology of the Ironbridge Gorge. Having a background predominantly in medieval and military archaeology, finding myself immersed in the industrial world of the 18th and 19th centuries was quite a learning curve from the start. One of the first 'community archaeology' events that I was involved with was a day of fieldwork with the Ironbridge Archaeology Volunteer Group, using LiDAR data for the area surrounding the important Bedlam Furnaces to identify and record features in the landscape. Completely unprepared for what we might find, I found myself going from managed grassland above the furnace complex, into undergrowth on the river bank and finally into a strangers garden to look at some brickwork which may or may not have been of interest. At that moment I thought if this is what community archaeology is about I'm going to enjoy the next 12 months tremendously. And so I have!

Since then we have launched the Ironbridge Archaeology Seminar Series, which is a bi-monthly archaeology-themed lecture series open to anyone and everyone. So far topics have included warfare in medieval Wales, community excavations at Ditherington Flax Mill, excavations at a Deserted Medieval Village in Herefordshire, the archaeology of the country house and an Ironbridge Archaeology Volunteer Group project on Thomas Newcomen and the Newcomen steam engine. Upcoming talks include Mesolithic spring sites in Western Britain, and Roger White's investigations at Wroxeter Roman City in April. We've also launched and run a

series of beginner's archaeology workshops, which have been funded by the Council of British Archaeology and English Heritage, and have focused on topics such as illustration and drawing, historic building recording, conservation and archiving, OpenSource GIS and pottery identification.

In addition to these public events, I've also been able to work with and coordinate the Ironbridge Archaeology Volunteer Group on a number of projects including recording a collection of tile moulds discovered during renovations to the Jackfield Tile Museum, an excavation in Madeley looking for evidence associated with the early 19th century china decorator and manufacturer, Thomas Martin Randall, and we've just started a project using the historic maps we have in the archaeology archive at IGMT to create some thematic maps of the local area. I've also managed to fit in time to run a series of events for the Festival of Archaeology in July, put together a world war themed guided walk to coincide with the museum's 1940s event at Blists Hill in June, worked with a couple of the local primary schools and youth groups for archaeology related outreach sessions, and helped launch the Ironbridge Young Archaeologists' Club.

It's been a thoroughly exciting, busy and educational year, from which I've learnt a lot. Thinking back to that day at Bedlam furnaces, I think I've come a long way in understanding what community archaeology is really about. For those of us that are lucky enough to work in the heritage sector, discovering something new about our past is part of everyday life, however not everyone is lucky enough to do so, yet that does not mean that doors should be closed to them. Working with volunteers at the museum and providing access to training and learning to interested parties through both the lectures and workshops that we've run this year has been thoroughly rewarding, opening my eyes afresh to the excitement and enjoyment associated with working in archaeology, and encouraging me to continue working with community groups, volunteers and children in the years ahead.

*Samantha Colclough, Community Archaeology Training Placement
Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trustt*

The Place-Names of Shropshire

In 1961, spurred on by local enthusiasm, Dr Margaret Gelling began to organise the collection of materials for a survey of Shropshire place-names, and for the next 27 years, a group of researchers from the area helped her to gather the earliest records of thousands of major and minor place-names. From 1990, the results began to appear in print under the auspices of the English Place-Name Society (EPNS). Between then and 2012, the first six volumes of The Place-Names of Shropshire were produced, the last of which was almost complete at the time of Margaret's death in 2009, and was published posthumously. These six volumes treated all the county's major names (the names of towns, villages, parishes and townships), as well as the minor names of most of northern and eastern Shropshire (see Map 1), but left the south and west without published coverage (Map 2).

In 2012, funding was obtained from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) for a new project to complete the EPNS survey of Shropshire, using the data assembled by Margaret (which survive as extensive catalogues of slips filed in her old shoeboxes!), supplemented with new material where necessary. This four-year project, launched in January 2013, will bring to completion the long-term study of Shropshire place-names. In four further volumes, we aim to cover the remainder of the county and to provide a full introduction to the completed survey.

The project is a collaboration between the Institute for Name-Studies (INS), University of Nottingham, and the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies (CAWCS) at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth. John Baker, Sarah Beach, Jayne Carroll, and Paul Cavill at the INS are concentrating on the hundreds of Stottesdon, Overs, Purslow, Chirbury and part of Munslow. Meanwhile David Parsons and Helen Watt at CAWCS are focusing on the more 'Welsh' hundreds of Oswestry and Clun. Emily Pennifold, currently working on her PhD at CAWCS, is also attached to the project and is looking at field-names of the Anglo-Welsh border.

Further details can be found on the project website: <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ins/projects/shropshire/index.aspx>

For all enquiries, please send emails to shropshire@nottingham.ac.uk



Map 1



Map 2

The Bagley shield: lost but (we hope) not gone forever

In March 1865 Joseph Dicken was draining a meadow on Baggy Moor west of Bagley in Hordley parish (in the valley of the River Perry) when, at a depth of 3 – 4 feet, he discovered a fine copper-alloy shield of Late Bronze Age Yetholm type. The shield was 23 inches in diameter and had been placed in an upright or sloping position in the ground. It was given to the owner of the land a Mr J Stanton by whom it was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries on 14th December 1865. He passed it to his nephew Mr T J Provis of The Grange, Ellesmere who loaned it to the Society of Antiquaries 1873 Exhibition of Bronze Implements. It is said to have been ‘carefully preserved during his lifetime’ and, apparently, ‘put away’ during the sale of his furniture after his death (ca. 1898) but has not been seen since despite extensive, and assiduous, searching by, among others, the late Miss Lily Chitty. Fortunately a photograph of the shield was taken and a copy of this survives in the National Museum of Wales as does a 19th century drawing held at the British Museum (personal information, Dr.



19th century photograph of the Bagley shield (courtesy of NMW)

Marion Uckelmann). Despite many rumours of rediscovery over the years none has been substantiated. It is possible, of course, that the shield was destroyed or thrown away but some hope remains – recently a shield of similar date which had not been seen since the mid-19th century was rediscovered hanging on a wall in Yorkshire! Perhaps someone, somewhere in Shropshire, has seen an unusual dustbin lid or manhole cover...

The Oswestry Seminar Series: future assured

The Oswestry Seminar Series which, for seven years, has attracted capacity audiences of archaeologists and historians to the Marches School came to an end last October. Now Old Oswestry Landscape and Archaeology Project are delighted to announce that the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust has stepped in and there will be a 2014 seminar. The date for your diaries is 25th October 2014 and we trust that this will be welcome news to the many well-wishers and supporters who hoped we would find a way to continue with this very enjoyable and successful event.

Heather Hidden

Book News

Barrett, Christopher. ‘Roland and Crusade Imagery in an English Royal Chapel: Early thirteenth century wall paintings in Claverley Church, Shropshire’
Antiquaries Journal **92** (2012) 129-168

Haslam, Jeremy. *Town Plan analysis and the limits of inference: the cases of Bridgnorth and Ludlow, Shropshire*
on
<http://www.jeremyhaslam.wordpress.com>

*Copy deadline for the Autumn 2014
Newsletter is Friday 25th July 2014.*

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SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Shropshire
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SOCIETY NEWS

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With a wide-ranging programme this meeting will provide a review of the very latest research into Shropshire during the Roman period.

Places are still available at the very reasonable cost of £15.00 which includes lunch and afternoon tea.

Subscriptions and Mailings: A reminder that annual subscriptions will be increasing from 1st January 2015.

The new rates will be:

individual subscriptions:	£19
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If you are a UK taxpayer please do remember to fill in a Gift Aid Declaration Form to cover your subscription. To obtain a current Gift Aid Declaration Form please contact the Newsletter Editor.

Many thanks to those who have provided us with email addresses – but we would still appreciate it if more of you signed up to receive mailings electronically. This really does save us a great deal of money!

Meetings Group: The society's **Meetings Group** is still looking for assistance with the development of the Society's events programme – whether in the form of new members of the group or just suggestions and ideas.

Please contact the Newsletter Editor if you think you can help.

Christmas Social Event

Our 2014 Christmas Social Event will take place at 2.30pm on Saturday 13th December at Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery, The Music Hall, The Square, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LH.



An opportunity to see the fantastic new museum which highlights both the town of Shrewsbury and the wonderful heritage of our county. Cost £5 to include admission and refreshments (payable on the day). Advance booking essential. Full details of how to book can be found in the **2014 – 2015 Winter Meetings Programme** (enclosed with this newsletter).

Heritage Open Days 11th – 14th September 2014

The 2014 Heritage Open Days event will run this year from Thursday (11th September) until Sunday (14th September). During that period there will be open days / events / activities at nearly twenty locations throughout the county. Details of events at the Ditherington Flaxmill Maltings can be found on page 3 of this Newsletter. For a full list of county venues, further information and details of booking requirements visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk

The Wrekin Local Studies Forum

Back in 1997, as part of the planning process in creating services to be delivered by the new Telford & Wrekin Unitary Authority, a team from the local library service identified all the local societies, organisations and agencies with an interest in local studies/community history and invited them to a meeting with a view to forming a loose confederation, which could advise the new library service on how the local studies collections should be developed. At the first meeting, mutual suspicions were aired, enough areas of shared interest identified and an agreement to meet again resolved. At the second meeting a name for the group was decided upon – the Wrekin Local Studies Forum.

Since that date the Wrekin Local Studies Forum has brought together, at a quarterly meeting, representatives of a dozen and more local history groups based in a broad Wrekin area, plus Telford & Wrekin Libraries, Shropshire Archives, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum and other interested parties such as the local Museum Development Officer. After many years at Telford Library the venue for our meetings is now the new Wellington Library, the home of T&W Libraries' Community History Centre.



Gillian Linscott of the Crime Writers' Association at the Edith Pargeter Day

These lively gatherings are a chance for an exchange of news, experience and expertise, and, importantly, an opportunity for agencies to make presentations to a number of societies grouped together in one place, either at our invitation or often at their request. In the past these have included for example the Heritage Lottery Fund, Midlands Sound Archive and Shropshire Historic Environment Team. Between meetings, news of events or of queries raised by respondents to our website is circulated by e-mail. The website, run by one of our members, is a valuable publicity tool as is the twice-yearly calendar, listing events to be held by member groups, which is circulated to all local libraries, Shropshire Archives and tourism venues. The Autumn edition also contains a 'block advert' for each group to give publicity for its aims and activities. For this we ask for a subscription to cover the printing costs, but for a smaller fee we are happy to include simple details of meetings from any relevant group which would like to contact us.

Most years WLSF plans a particular event to promote some aspect of local history research. In the early years this often took the form of an exhibition or display, on a number of occasions a day for member societies to have stands in Telford Town Centre. More recently we have looked for a local initiative to support, for example a few years ago a 'history day' in Wellington. In 2013 we held a particularly successful Edith Pargeter Day of talks and walks in Dawley to mark the 100th anniversary of her birth. As is always the case we had some excellent local speakers, but we were also very pleased to welcome Gillian Linscott of the Crime Writers Association.

The Forum's Transactions are produced more or less annually. In some years this publication aims to focus on new work by local researchers and in others to act as a record of a particular event by inviting the speakers to contribute articles. The latter include collections based on day schools to celebrate the lives and achievements of William Reynolds (2003) and John Randall (2010) and another in 2013 held in memory of Ken Jones, the most knowledgeable of local historians, a supporter of many groups, and a founder member of the WLSF itself.

The WLSF aims both to encourage local history research and also access to its results. There is great interest in the heritage of such a historically significant area and we are always happy to welcome representatives from other groups, to offer practical support where possible and in particular an opportunity to meet like-minded and experienced local historians.

www.wlsf.org.uk

Researching the Flax Mill and its people

The Friends of the Flaxmill Maltings has an active Documentary Research Group which, over the last 18 months or so, has been carrying out a large scale research exercise focused on the people of Castlefields and Ditherington in the 19th century.

Collecting Names

The first step has been to build a Database of all individuals who lived in the area in the Nineteenth Century. This has been done by entering Lists of individuals into Excel spreadsheets which are then imported into an Access Database.

The Census has been the principal Source for this first stage of work.

We have attempted to capture ALL the Census Entries for the Castlefields and Ditherington area between 1841 and 1881, using the online Ancestry records.

We have now captured all but the last four Enumeration Districts for 1881.

The various items of information in the Census are manipulated in the Access Database to automatically generate a Summary of everything the Record tells us about that Person, for example:-

John Farmer

Age: 15. Born c 1836 Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

Occupation: Flax Sorter. Living in 26 Spring Gardens.

Relationship to Head of Household: Son. Total no in

Household: 11. Head of Household is William Farmer whose Occupation is Agricultural Labourer

Other Sources of Names captured so far

1851 Tithe Apportionment Schedule: The Owners and Occupiers of all the Plots of Land recorded in "Castle Ward Without", including the Marshall Company Allotments, just North of the Flax Mill.

The Parish Apprentices assigned to the Flax Mill by Shrewsbury House of Industry and the Atcham Union of Parishes c 1800 and 1826.

Monumental Inscriptions in St Michael's Churchyard from the Record made by the Family History Society.

Parish Registers We have also carried out selective Data Capture from the Shrewsbury St Mary's and then St Michael's Parish Registers between 1796 and 1886, where the Occupation recorded flags a link to the Flax Mill.

The Church Rate Books 1800 to 1825 have given us the names of the householders of the "Houses near the Manufactory" and "Ditherington Houses" and the rents they paid.

The 1821 Census (in the vicinity of the Flax Mill) - a simple List of the Heads of Households

What Next?

We now have a considerable number of Records of Individuals, and often also the means to develop records of their families over several generations. Now that the Shropshire Parish Registers are available online we can start using them to fill out the information we hold, for example finding out the married names of the younger female individuals, and the maiden names of the older ones, thereby enabling us to recognise the same individual before and after marriage.

What is it all for?

The Database will enable us to analyse the whole community that grew up around the Flax Mill, and in particular those people who worked there. We will be able to do statistical analysis to see change during the mid and late 19th century in



*Ditherington Flaxmill Maltings from the air in 1995
(©CPAT 95/C/1530 21/03/1995)*

people's occupations, where they were born, where in the study area they lived, and the age and gender distribution of the Flax Mill workforce.

However, it will also enable us to focus in on families and individuals and their stories, as records accumulate of particular individuals in which they are baptised, enter and sometimes change employment, get married, baptise and sometimes bury children, are widowed and perhaps remarry, and finally get buried or just disappear.

Already it is possible to output records of all those with the same surname and rearrange parts of them into a mini biography of a particular family. This process will in turn give rise to new questions, as we seek to fill gaps and add context.

It is hoped that all this will lead to articles in the Transactions, exhibitions in the Flax Mill and eventually online resources that will engage the public with the story of the Mill.

Penny Ward, Friends of the Flaxmill Maltings.

Do contact me if you would like to get involved.

Penny.a.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

Forthcoming events at the Flaxmill Maltings:

Guided tours

There will be guided evening tours of the Flaxmill Maltings on Thursday 28th August and Friday 26th September. The tours are free but numbers will be limited. For further details see www.flaxmill-maltings.co.uk

Heritage Open Days Weekend at the Flaxmill Maltings.

Saturday 13th September 10am – 4pm

Sunday 14th September 10am – 4pm

Guided tours will be available at regular intervals throughout the weekend. There will be talks and presentations on the history, structure and uses of the buildings. A varied programme of other events will also be taking place over the weekend. Explore the history of the Flax Mill by taking part in hands-on art, textile and science-based drop-in activities. There will be an art exhibition and live music on site. Refreshments available.

Access

The site is derelict and currently on the *English Heritage Buildings at Risk Register*. Visitors must wear hard hats and appropriate footwear. Stairs, uneven surfaces and poor lighting make some areas of the site inaccessible for visitors with disabilities.

Notes from the finds desk of the PAS

Well this section is called finds from the desk of the PAS – but actually I have been laid low with back problems recently – so maybe it should be called ‘notes from the finds bed of the PAS’. However, that aside, the months since my last update have been very busy so find below some of the most interesting artefacts that have been recorded by the PAS from the county. So as always – if you have a spare half hour (after reading the rest of this issue) please do take a look at the PAS database – www.finds.org.uk - for many other interesting things.

The last few months have been particularly good for me because, as many of you know, I am especially interested in the prehistoric periods and recently we have recorded a significant number of Bronze Age finds including two flat axes, a socketed axe and a string looped spearhead all from the North of the county. The two flat axes are particularly important:

The first is of Early Bronze Age date (2350 - 2050 BC) discovered in the Hinstock Area, North East Shropshire 1. The flat axe is broadly sub rectangular in shape with a splayed crescent shaped blade. In profile it is broadly lentoid, with slight tapering edges.



The butt is relatively thin having a narrow rounded profile, whilst the sides of the axe gently expand in width from the butt to the blade with a crescentic cutting / blade edge. The axe is thickest at the mid-point with traces of a proto stop ridge present. Casting ‘flaws’ or gas bubbles are present over most of the surface of the flat axehead. The axe is a mid to dark green colour, with an uneven surface patina. Abrasion, caused by movement whilst within the ploughsoil, has resulted in a loss of some of the original surface detail. The axehead is best described as coming from the later phases of the Early Bronze Age and is comparable to the Migdale type; which are typified by axes with narrower butts which flare at the cutting edge.

The second flat axe is also of early Bronze Age date but dates from slightly later within the period (2000-1700BC); it was discovered in the Telford Area 2. The axe is small (diminutive) but is complete with very little wear. In plan the axe is broadly rectangular with an expanded and splayed crescentic cutting edge and thin rounded (D shaped) butt. In profile the axe has a distinct lentoid shape. At the mid-point of the axe is a slight median swelling / bevel / proto stop-ridge. The long edges of the axe expand gently from the butt until they splay to form the crescent shaped blade. The tips of which have been worn / abraded as has the blade edge itself. However it is likely that the axe had been worn and used prior to deposition, with the blade shape being slightly distorted by use. The axe is a mid green colour with a highly polished but abraded patina, which has been damaged in areas. It is best described as coming from the later phases of the Early Bronze Age specifically within the early developed flat axe tradition 2000 - 1700 BC. This

- 1 PAS record: WMID-E42FB1
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/613593>
recorded by Teresa Gilmore, FLO Staffs and West Midlands
- 2 PAS record: HESH-A147C8
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/615081>

axe is very similar to those identified as either Type Migdale Variant Biggar although on this type the blade doesn’t expand to create such distinct blade tips. The other parallel is with the Developed Axe series, Type Aylesford. It should be noted though that all these parallels are all larger than this example.

The spearhead is formed of cast bronze (copper alloy) and is of Middle Bronze Age date (1500 - 1150 BC); it was discovered in the Ercall Area ³. The spearhead fits best within the Developed side-looped series of spearheads with ogival blades. The spearhead is irregular in plan and broadly triangular in profile. The blade is incomplete, the cutting edges having been removed through abrasion and corrosion. The blade has a lozenge shaped mid-rib that extends to the tip adding strength and rigidity to the weapon. The socket is cylindrical and tapers into the midrib; below the blade it expands slightly toward the base. The mouth of the socket is circular and the two loops (string side loops) are present in line with the blade being positioned at the midpoint between the blade and base of the socket. The loops extend slightly from the socket and have flattened augments lozenge shaped plates. The casting seams on either edge of the spear have trimmed and hammered flat. On one side in line but below the loop is a small rectangular hole or slot cut into the socket; the purpose of this hole is unknown - it has rounded corners and the inside edge are worn. The slot is also patinated suggesting that it was deliberately formed and contemporary with use. There is no decoration present. The spearhead is a mid-brown green colour with a well preserved but laminating polished surface patina. The spearhead is also stained with large amounts of orange corrosion; most probably iron pan from wet soil conditions. The spear also has a bend at the mid-point with a deep lateral crack. It is difficult to tell when this damage occurred – it is possibly an artefact of movement in the soil but it is also possible that it was deliberately damaged when deposited. Similar looped spearheads are dated to the Middle Bronze Age specifically the second phase of Acton Park (2), Taunton (Cemmaes) or Pennard (1450-1125 BC) metalworking traditions. This type of spearhead have a distribution away from Wales and the Midlands being more focused on the South and East.

The final bronze age object is a complete bronze ribbed socketed axe discovered in the Ellesmere area ⁴. This axe has a very square shaped mouth and relatively straight sides which expand near the base of the socket. The sides flare to form a slightly expanded blade edge. The mouth of the axe is sub-rectangular in cross-section; it has been unevenly shaped with the edges of the mouth being heavily trimmed to remove the four casting jets. The collar around the mouth is indistinct with very straight sides that are interrupted by a thick transverse moulded rib which extends across both faces and sides. The side loop is relatively small and wide having a lentoid cross section and is set in a low position beneath the collar in line with this horizontal rib. On each face of the axe, three parallel ribs descend from the lower edge of the horizontal rib. Two further less well defined vertical ribs descend along the external edge of each face. The casting flashes on the sides of the axe have been trimmed and hammered flat and suggest some preparation for use. The

- 3 PAS record: HESH-B9E688
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/615472>
- 4 PAS record: HESH-ECF938
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/599021>

axe is damaged / marked in several areas - all of this damage cuts through or removes the surface patina suggesting it is relatively recent and is therefore post deposition. Overall the axe is a mid-green brown colour with a thick well developed but scratched surface patina. The axehead fits well with those known from the later Ewart Park phase of the late Bronze Age 950 - 750 BC and due to the straight sides the date range may also fit with Bronze - Iron Age transition period known as Llyn Fawr which extends the date range to c. 650 BC.



Iron Age coins are very rare finds for Shropshire with very few being found in recent years; the largest concentration of these has



been recovered from the excavations at Wroxeter. This new example is from the Craven Arms area ⁵ and was found in the same area as a particularly fine late La Tene style brooch. The coin is a gold-plated contemporary copy of a late Iron Age gold stater of the Western Region / Dobunnic tribe - attributed to the tribal leader CATTI - dated c. AD 1 - 20. The coin is formed on a copper alloy core with a gold plated surface. The obverse has a leaf design formed from a central vertical line from which diagonal linear branches extend - all of which have pellet terminals. The reverse depicts a horse advancing right - with tail in three sections - above which is inscribed CATTI - there is no record of who Catti was.

A further coin is a relatively rare one for this part of the world being a silver Roman denarius of the emperor Carausius (AD 286-293) found near Market Drayton ⁶ and struck at the mint of



Londinium (London). The reverse of the coin shows the emperor advancing left on horseback raising his right hand in greeting and holding a sceptre in left; a small depiction of a captive slave is shown to his left. The inscription on the reverse reads ADVENTVS AVG (a contraction of ADVENTVS AVGVSTI). Inscriptions of this kind commemorate the imperial sovereign's arrival at Rome, either at the commencement of his reign, or on his return from a distance. At their accession to the throne, emperors went on horseback, and sometimes even on foot; and thus they made their first public entry into the capital of the Roman world. reverse type depicting Emperor on horseback left.

An important and relatively rare lead strap end dating from the 10th or earlier 11th century has been recorded from the Bishop Castle area ⁷. Unusually there is a large perforation in the centre of the plate which suggests that this may be

associated with a book rather than dress fitting. The reverse of the strap end is flat whilst the upper face of the strap end has a small step defining the split end from the plate. The pointed terminal also has some much abraded moulded decoration at the tip. The strap end has an uneven green / brown patina.



The strap end is comparable to other examples which have the same shape and terminals with animal heads often with holes. This form is thought to originate from Ireland and it is interesting to see one in lead as dress accessories cast in lead alloy are most associated with Anglo-Scandinavian/late Saxon traditions. This form of strap ends were long-lasting with examples being found in contexts dated from the later ninth to the eleventh centuries AD. **(Image 5 to go with this para)**

This ingot (or billet) was discovered on the slopes of Clew Hill ⁸, which is well known for its industrial heritage and mining, however the discovery of this artefact suggests that this activity may well extend back into the Medieval period suggesting that the area has a high potential for producing other similar artefacts in the future. This is also a rare find as it is the raw end product of smithing - something which has value and would have been used rather than stored or preserved. The iron ingot or billet is formed from a hammer shaped bloom of probable Early Medieval - early Post Medieval date (AD 550-1550). The ingot is broadly rectangular in plan and triangular in cross section. It has an uneven surface patina and the surviving surface has a series of oval scars, most likely from the spalling of surface corrosion. One end has a flattened and polished removal where the surface had been tested by the finder with an angle grinder. This test suggested that it was formed from wrought iron. The ingot is a mid-grey brown colour with distinct areas of dull red colour. A direct local parallel has not been found, but it is most likely to date from the later medieval period (AD 1200-1450). Blair ⁹ notes that: the spongy iron bloom produced in direct process furnaces needed to be consolidated into a useful billet or bar iron before a smith could fashion an implement. Bloom consolidation is a time-consuming and wasteful process. A full day's work by a smith was needed to consolidate 2kg of bloom into billet. Up to half the weight of the bloom was lost in the consolidation process.

The last artefact is a complete late Medieval slightly abraded decorated and glazed floor tile (AD 1200-1400) discovered in a garden in Newport, Shropshire ¹⁰. The design is complete and features a central 'Holy' cross / crucifix with a crown of thorns depicted across its centre. It is surrounded by the 'Instruments of the Passion' including the spear and sponge which are crossed diagonally through the lower field of the tile. Clockwise, from the bottom left are the: the pincers, three nails, flail, the pillar / column where Jesus was whipped entwined with a rope arranged in a figure of

5 PAS record: HESH-C2D524
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/568495>
 6 PAS record WMID-2C5A44
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/625495>
 recorded by Teresa Gilmore, FLO Staffs and West Midlands
 7 PAS record: HESH-E814B2
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/581334>

8 PAS record: HESH-C26546
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/609605>
 9 Blair C. 2001: 'Ironworking' in Crabtree P.J. (Ed.) *Medieval Archaeology; an encyclopaedia* New York pp 181-184
 10 PAS record: HESH-0E5F45
<http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/583276>

eight, a flagon, a cup (holy grail), a cockerel / Rooster, dice, temple / altar, ladder, another flail and a hammer. The sides and reverse of the tile are covered in a white



mortar residue which creates difficulty in observing the tile's fabric. The chip on the reverse of tile indicates that the tile fabric has an oxidized orange surface with large, rounded sandy inclusions. The depiction of the 'Instruments of the Passion' are a relatively common medieval ecclesiastical scene. Comparable tiles have been identified in Shrewsbury Abbey (Roger White *pers comm*) and a partial tile with the same image was excavated from Lilleshall Abbey and is now housed in the British Museum (1947.0505.2810-12). It is likely that these examples were produced at the same kiln site. Another partial example has been recorded on the PAS database from Whitgreave, Staffordshire (HESH-6F1F46).

As these tiles seem to be a locally produced it would be interesting to know if other examples are preserved within churches and archaeological archives – if members of the society do know of any others then please get in touch at the addresses below.

Peter Reavill, July 2014

peter.reavill@shropshire.gov.uk

Portable Antiquities Scheme, Ludlow Museum Resource Centre, 7-9 Parkway, Ludlow SY8 2PG

The Pontesbury Manor Datestone and its Heraldry

The Datestone

Some time after 1551 the Manor of Pontesbury was sold by William



Leighton to Roger Owen of Conover. The coat of arms [*Argent, a lion rampant sable, armed and langued gules, a canton of the second*] indicates that the individual of the initials "W O" was descended from the ancient Welsh family of Owen of Llundlo, Co: Montgomery. The first to assume the surname Owen was Richard Owen, son of Owen ap John, High Sheriff of Montgomery around 1611. A descendant of his was William Owen of Bettws, Co: Montgomery.

Pontesbury Parish was important and large enough to have three livings, over each a rector. A William Owen was listed as rector of the first and second portions in 1640 and he built the parsonage of the second portion in 1661 as shown on the datestone above.

This overmantle was originally in the older part of the Manor House, Pontesbury and on the demolition of this building in the late seventies the immense sandstone was put safely into store. It was acquired by a gentleman then living at Sibberscott where it lay upside down and shrouded in plastic against the elements for several years. The above photograph was taken in May 1980 shortly after its removal there.

From here the overmantle passed through a series of speculative changes of ownership before being noticed online by Mr David Carey of Shifnal Historical Group. It was acquired and several years were spent trying to find an appropriate home for it. Due to their foresight it can finally be seen, nicely displayed and very permanently

mounted into a wall in the recently refurbished "Nag's Head" public house Pontesbury. Its varied movements have resulted in an unfortunate deterioration of the artwork, nevertheless it remains an important link with local history.

Heraldry on the Pontesbury Manor Datestone

Owen Arms

[*Argent, a lion rampant sable, armed and langued gules, a canton of the second*]

The impaled escutcheon "W O" was most probably that of William Owen of Bettws, Montgomery. It shows on the male [dexter] side, that is the left of the image, a black rampant lion with a red tongue and claws on a silver ground, a black square [canton] appears at the upper left corner in the usual position. Note that right and left of the shield are described from the bearer's point of view not the opponent's. This was the coat of arms of the ancient Welsh family Owen of Llundlo, Montgomery. Their line can be traced back to Howel Dda, King of South Wales. The first to assume the surname Owen was Richard Owen son of Owen ap John, High Sheriff of Montgomery ca. 1611. William Owen of Bettws was a descendant.



Owen Arms: unretouched (above) and retouched (below)

The heraldry of the sinister side of the impalement resembles that of some Corbet lines. In that case the birds are ravens. Otherwise, Cornish choughs do occur in Owen heraldry, here possibly painted in error without the red beak and legs.

Herbert Arms

After the Norman Conquest, Pontesbury was held by the Fitz-Corbets under Roger de Montgomery. It was later held under the Corbets by the Fitz-Herberts, in particular, Peter Fitz-Herbert, generally considered to be the ancestor of the Earls of Pembroke. Reginald Fitz-Herbert, grandson of the first Fitz-Herbert lord of the manor died in 1286. The Herbert association with the manor seems sufficient to explain their heraldry being exhibited later on the datestone.



The shield poses an interesting question. It is surmounted by an earl's coronet and the wyvern crest used by the Herbert families: Earls of Powys, Pembroke, Montgomery, Huntingdon and Caernarfon. However, these all divide the background to the shield blue and red [*azure and gules in pale*]. The shield featured is wholly red [*gules*] as found in some earlier and less prominent Fitz-Herbert families.

David J Smith January 2014

References: Pontesbury Parish Registers; Papworth's Ordinary of British Armorial; Burke's General Armory; Fairburn's Book of Crests; Battle Abbey Roll, Duchess of Cleveland 1889; Victoria County History of Shropshire

Medieval floor tiles from Cleobury Mortimer Church

A recent article in the Shropshire Newsletter gave an account of a collection of medieval floor tiles that had recently been exposed at Billingsley church, after being hidden beneath a carpet for the last 30 years. At Cleobury at least 30 medieval tiles survive in a pavement next to the font; there may be more because the pavement extends beneath a wooden platform. At least thirteen of the tiles were originally covered in a black glaze and a further five had plain yellow surfaces. Simple black, yellow and red tiles were used to create geometric patterns.

A number of the tiles are decorated with images. Two tiles carry a shield with crossed keys and a sword in the middle. There is a truncated fleur-de-lys on top of shield and three lobed plants on either side. The crossed keys with a sword are the symbols of Saint Peter and Saint Paul; more significantly, they are the arms of Gloucester Cathedral which is dedicated to these saints. A variant of this design can be found at Ewenny Priory in South Wales; this has a slightly different decoration around the shield and the sword is pointing in the opposite direction, but the overall similarity is strong, suggesting similar origins for the two tiles.

The remaining decorated tiles are either very worn or fragmentary, but in most cases enough survives to allow the design to be identified. The clearest shows the head of a lion. This would originally have been one of a set of sixteen tiles, set in a square. When assembled, the outer set of twelve tiles had a design of two circular bands, between which were four crouching lions, each with foliage emerging from its mouth. Inside this a number of designs were formed from a square made of four tiles. One of these was a double petalled rose (ie a "Tudor" rose); what is probably a very worn version of this is also in the Cleobury pavement. Two more of the tiles are also from the outer and central layers of a sixteen-tile design. The outer design consists of a series of small crosses, each set in a circle, with the whole surrounded by two bands. Inside this are four crouching winged creatures.

At Cleobury it is possible to see the crosses and the back end of one of the creatures. The central design shows a circle surrounded by rays and crescents, with an outer band decorated by stars.



One tile at Cleobury shows a quarter of this design. A very worn design shows what is probably an inscription set above a circle. It is harder to find a precedent for this tile than the others, but what survives is consistent with a tile commemorating Abbot Thomas Sebright of Gloucester Abbey

The identifiable tiles all date from the late 15th or early 16th Centuries, similar to those of Billingsley. They were probably made in workshops based on Malvern Chase and either Worcester or Droitwich. There is no clue as to who paid for the tiles. However, by 1500 Cleobury had become the personal property of the monarch; the revenues from the town were often given as pensions to royal favourites. Whilst the town itself was little more than a large village, Ludlow was a centre of regional government and Bewdley was also important; powerful people would pass through Cleobury. Thus there were potential wealthy patrons who could easily afford to pay for a new floor for the church.

An extended version of this article can be found in the Cleobury Chronicles, volume 10, available from the Cleobury Mortimer Historical Society; contact David Poyner for details

E: David@D-Poyner.freereserve.co.uk, Tel: 01562 68638).

A cropmark enclosure at Newton, nr Ellesmere

In early June 2014, a team of 14 volunteers recruited by the Meres and Mosses Landscape Partnership Scheme (<http://www.themeressandmosses.co.uk/>) and led by the Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council investigated the site of a prehistoric enclosure near Ellesmere. The enclosure (HER 02447) was known from aerial photographs and thought to be a farmstead of possible Iron Age date. The enclosure lies at the end of a promontory overlooking a small mere and the Shropshire Union Canal.

The excavations aimed to confirm the presence of the enclosure ditch suggested by the cropmarks on aerial photographs, and to try to get some dating evidence for the site in the form of finds from the fill of the enclosure ditch.

Two trenches were excavated in an attempt to locate the buried ditch of the cropmark enclosure. The main trench was cut running down the hillside from west to east. The enclosure ditch was found in the eastern end of this trench. The ditch was seen to be broad and fairly shallow – about 3m wide but only just over 0.5m deep. It was filled with a sandy loam soil, but unfortunately the fill did not produce any finds to help with dating the enclosure. Soil samples were taken from the ditch fill by the Manchester Metropolitan University researchers for possible pollen analysis, and a small piece of charcoal recovered from the fill might provide a radio-carbon date.

A number of pieces of flint were found by the volunteers from the topsoil, including one waste flake which showed signs of having been worked. A very small fragment of possible prehistoric pottery and a number of pieces of post-medieval pottery were also recovered from the topsoil.

Hugh Hannaford



One of the sections cut across the enclosure ditch



Charlotte Orchard (Shropshire Council), Paul and Rosie (volunteers)



The main excavation trench, looking west. A number of sections have been cut at right angles across the enclosure ditch.

Shropshire Archives News August 2014

Service review and changes to opening hours:

Following the changes to opening hours and staffing structure the new service is running pretty well though we are finding that inevitably we are busier when we are open particularly with researchers using original archive material.

On line publishing – Find My Past: Shropshire parish and non-conformist registers dating up to 1900 are now on line with Find My Past and have been generally very well received. Free access to the Shropshire material (and some other counties) on Find My Past is available at **Shropshire Archives, and at all Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin libraries.**

Virtual and in person volunteering: Both volunteering projects continue to be successful – over 130 people from across the world have signed up at <http://www.heritageheroes.org.uk/>, for the Virtual Volunteering project. However, we are still looking for more volunteers so do have a look and see if you can help.

We have appointed Michael Turner, formerly manager at Acton Scott Historic Working Farm to replace John Benson as Project Manager on the Heritage Lottery funded Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage project. Two events to celebrate the completion of the project are planned; one in Much Wenlock on Sat 18 Oct, and a conference at Theatre Severn in Shrewsbury on Sat 28 Feb 2015. See below for further details.

Records, archive and museum store: The store at Hortonwood is now in use providing capacity for the storage of records, archives and museum collections. All the pre 1974 District Authority records are now housed there and are accessible on a weekly basis as before.

Shropshire World War One Commemorations: We have appointed Alison Mussell as part time co-ordinator for this project. She can be contacted on alison.mussell@shropshire.gov.uk. A key aim of the project is to establish a website to link with data on the Imperial War Museum website Lives of the First World War. We will be working on this very soon.

Friends of Shropshire Archives: We have a new Chair Jill Ming and are working to revamp the website using WordPress so that it includes booking and payment options.

Telford Our New Town Project: We're enjoying working with Telford libraries on this HLF funded project. Sal Mager is supervising the work and we are recruiting a part time Cataloguing Assistant to support the work. The project will, for the first time, create an outline catalogue for the very large Telford Development Corporation collection of records we hold and we are digitising selected items from the collection. All this information will form part of the online catalogue.

Shropshire Archive events

Saturday 18 October 2014: Much Wenlock History Day, Priory Hall, Much Wenlock. An afternoon of talks to celebrate the work done on the Much Wenlock Borough records.

Saturday 28 February 2015: Volunteering Conference, Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury. A day to bring together stories, research and discoveries made during the volunteering project

Saturday 18 April 2015: Sylvia Watts Day, Shifnal Village Hall, Shifnal. A day to celebrate the life and achievements of Sylvia Watts. A joint event with the Shifnal Local History Group.

CPAT October Day School

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) is holding a new annual day school ***Exploring the Borderland – Current Archaeology in the Marches*** on Saturday 25th October 2014. It will take place at The Marches School and Technology College, Morda road, Oswestry from 10am to 5pm.

The 2014 day school will have poster and photographic displays. Speakers at this year's day school will present the work of CPAT as well as work conducted by other professionals in Wales and the West Midlands.

TICKETS COST £10 to include sandwich lunch and refreshments.

For further information and booking please call Viviana Culshaw or Jenny Britnell 01938 553670.

Book News

Fraser, Mike. *Wheels of Providence: over the Ironbridge in the Victorian Journal of John Cox Bayliss*, (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014)

Moor, Jonathan. 'Aristocratic pretensions and heraldic skulduggery in fourteenth century Shropshire: Sir Nicholas Burnell at Acton Burnell' *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society* **XVIII** part 2 (2010)

Riall, Nicholas. 'Awaiting a Daniel for interpretation: the Tudor church screen at Llanfair Waterdine, Shropshire' *Archaeologia Cambrensis* **161** (2012) 389-409

West, Jeffrey and Palmer, Nicholas. *Haughmond Abbey: excavation of a 12th-century Cloister in its Historical and Landscape Context* (English Heritage, 2014)

Book News update

Deeds of the Palmers' Guild of Ludlow (Faraday, M A, 2012) referred to on page 8 of our Spring, 2013 Newsletter is now obtainable, in the UK, from the editor for £34.00 (hardback) or £24.00 (paperback) including UK postage.

E: f2594255@gmail.com . Payment by cheque to M.A. Faraday, 47 York Gardens, Walton on Thames, Surrey, KT12 3EW

Copy deadline for the Spring 2015 Newsletter is Friday 27th February 2015.

Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter Editor at 7 Elstree Close, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9QF or emailed to shelagh228@msn.com



SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY NEWSLETTER

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and
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Society
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SOCIETY NEWS

AGM: The **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the Society will be held at The Shirehall, Shrewsbury on Saturday 19th September 2015 at 2.00pm. The AGM will be followed by a talk on *The Place-Names of Shropshire* by Dr John Baker. For full details see the **Meetings Programme** which accompanies this Newsletter.

Subscriptions: Many thanks to those members who have set up a Standing Order or who have updated their existing order. This meant that over 60% of the subscriptions were paid on time at the beginning of January. However, about a third of the Standing Orders had not been updated to the new subscription rates. Please check that your SAHS Standing Order is for the correct amount (£19.00 Individual rate, £20.00 Family rate). If you find that it is wrong please correct it for next year and get the £5 to the Membership Secretary by post or by hand (contact details above).

Many thanks also to all who have returned a Gift Aid form. The Hon Treasurer is pleased to report that, in December, we were able to reclaim over £500 from HMRC an amount which included a back claim for all the new declarations recently received. If there are still members who would like to participate in the scheme but have not yet done so, Gift Aid forms are available to download from our website or, by post, from the Hon. Treasurer (Dr. Fran Bumpus, 9 Alexandra Avenue, Shrewsbury, SY3 9HT); the Membership Secretary or the Newsletter Editor (contact details above).

Note from the Secretary: Please note my new email address: georgecbaugh@gmail.com

‘The Stew’ Public Inquiry: Many members will be familiar with ‘The Stew’ – one of two rather dilapidated buildings situated between Theatre Severn and the Guildhall in Frankwell. ‘The Stew’ includes a late 17th – early 18th century structure and is, perhaps, the only surviving building that was associated with Shrewsbury’s important river trade. Its name probably derives from the location of medieval fishponds on the site. Although in a conservation area it is not individually listed and is under threat of demolition and replacement by a hotel. The proposal has been formally opposed by English Heritage and the Shrewsbury Civic Society and a similar application was rejected in 2007. The current application is now the subject of a Public Inquiry which will sit from 28th April – 1st May 2015 and again from 6th – 7th May 2015. The opening day will take place in the Wilfred Owen Room (Shirehall) after which it will continue in the combined Shrewsbury and Oswestry rooms at Shirehall for the duration. Start time to be confirmed but probably *ca.* 10.00am.

Pontesford Hill Appeal: The Shropshire Wildlife Trust is trying to raise £265,000 to purchase Pontesford Hill. Donations can be made online or by post to: Pontesford Hill Appeal, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, FREEPOST ANG 60017, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ZD. For further details see www.shropshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Festival of Archaeology 2015: The 25th Festival of Archaeology, co-ordinated by the Council for British Archaeology, will take place from 11th – 15th July 2015. There will be over 1000 events nationwide aimed at all ages and levels of interest. For further information see www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk

Fighting for survival?

Shropshire's museums, archives and heritage services

Few members of the Society can have failed to notice the reaction recently to the proposed cuts to the Museum Resource Centre in Ludlow. Opened with such fanfare just over a decade ago, the proposals were to have seen the staff within the building reduced to one half-post. The subsequent furor, centred on reaction within Ludlow itself, led to a partial reprieve in that one post will be kept full time for six months and will be reviewed after the May election. Ludlow has not been singled out: cuts have been taking place throughout the county heritage services, and are likely to continue as the Corporate Spending Review bites ever-deeper. Councils are being forced to focus on their statutory services, and these will inevitably take precedence over historic environment services which are non-statutory. Those heritage services that do survive are focused on those, such as planning-related activities, which have a means to earn at least some of their keep through fees levied for information and advice provided. Even these areas have been severely cut, however.

These are difficult times throughout the sector, and across the country. If we wish to maintain at least a bare minimum of services in the future we will have to accept change, but we must also fight to maintain at least that minimum level. Doing so will not be easy, but there are a number of things that we, as a Society, ought to be thinking about.

First is the obvious one that, in the run up to the election, when we are door-stepped by prospective candidates, ask about heritage and cultural services. What are the policies of the parties, and what are they proposing to do about the historic environment services in the next parliament? Will they be seeking to make such services statutory? I am not suggesting that their answer will, or should, sway your vote one way or the other, but it will at least make candidates aware that it is an issue that people are interested and engaged with. Second, with places like the museums and the archive services the phrase 'Use them, or Lose them' comes to mind. If politicians see that the public are apathetic about museums and archives, they will reason that no-one will miss them when they are gone. The axe will fall all the quicker. Please make use of the archives, including the archaeological archives held in store by the county, and visit the museums. An increase in numbers will show, in the most obvious possible way, that people really do care about these services. Lastly, I would argue that the Society needs to reach out across the county to the other historical and archaeological societies, along with the natural environment sector which is equally affected, and join together with them to express our rejection of the current approach to cutting the historic environment services. It is evident, from the reactions in Ludlow and Oswestry to their particular local heritage battles, that people really do care. If we all stood together and shouted about the heritage cuts, perhaps they might be more inclined to listen.

Roger White

The future of Shropshire Museums Resource Centre based in Ludlow.

The SMRC cares for the county collections that are not on display in the Music Hall, Castle Museum & Pump Room in Shrewsbury, or at Much Wenlock, Ludlow, Acton Scott and Whitchurch Museums. As many members know it is an excellent facility, part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and opened by the Queen in 2003. In the past 12 months the LMRC has had 13,400 visitors, 922 adults attended courses based on the collections & in excess of 1400 children attended education sessions. In addition a team of over forty volunteers have contributed 3176 hours (equivalent to over 430 days) of their time digitizing, cataloguing, cleaning and conserving the museum collections.

Before Christmas the three members of staff based in Ludlow (curator, curatorial assistant and administrator), were told that they would receive their redundancies, effective May. These three posts (2.8 full time equivalents) are to be replaced with a single curator's post to work two and a half days a week. This is a staffing reduction of 80%. A new as yet undisclosed working model for access and staffing is to be put in place.

The friends of Ludlow Museum encouraged our local MP Philip Dunne, to visit and Professor Michael Rosenbaum and I took him round. After his visit Philip wrote: "I was impressed by the well maintained collection and the usage of the facility, and by the hard work of both the professional staff and the volunteers ... I made clear my own view that the facility should be able to be maintained for normal weekly opening hours if at all possible". This intervention has persuaded the council to extend the Curator post for six months to give us time to see if we can find other external funding.

It is important to remember that the Ludlow Town Museum which was at the Assembly Rooms has been moved out, is in boxes and waiting to go back to its former home in The Buttercross at the top of Broad Street. This has been delayed partly because of finance issues with Shirehall. Part of the extension of time of the curator's post is to allow this work to be completed. Ludlow Town Council will take over the running of the town museum.

Michael Rosenbaum has motivated the world of Geology and Palaeontology whose practitioners at all levels have contacted the Council to express their deep concern. The LMRC is a County, National and International Resource and has a superb collection of fossils from the region. It is important that this collection is maintained and is accessible to scientists wishing to work with it.

Likewise the LMRC holds a large archaeological collection which is regularly used by the public and researchers. However, more recent site archives from developer funded work have now been moved to an industrial park in Telford. This site has no public access and, if people wish to consult it, the material needs to be transported to Ludlow

where there is space for it to be studied.

A public meeting in Ludlow in January was attended by over 200 people and enabled the community to express their opposition to the cuts. Emeritus Professor Hugh Torrens, Giles Miller and Sir Neil Cossons spoke from the floor.

Following this a petition was started and has achieved in excess of 1,000 signatures, which enabled me to address a meeting of the full council.

Further a group of us now meet regularly to discuss the future of Shropshire's Museums. The LMRC was the tip of the iceberg. It is the future of all of the County's Museums is at stake. The Council has taken the decision to run them with a skeleton staff and not transfer them into a separate trust and this is not satisfactory, nor good for the collections.

If you would like to know more then please email the team at saveLMRC@gmail.com. If you feel passionately about this then I urge you to write to tina.woodward@shropshire.gov.uk - and to your own Shropshire Councillor.

Lottie James (Friends of Ludlow Museum)



*Ludlow Museum and Resource Centre
(Peter Reavill)*

Shropshire Archives News February 2015

Shropshire Volunteering Projects

Our two volunteering projects funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England; Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage and Heritage Heroes, are now moving towards a close. Over the last three years we have learnt a huge amount about managing volunteers working on archive and museum collections, and the satisfactions and challenges that brings.

The task now is to establish what volunteering in the future will look like within the existing services – we know that volunteering will continue but we need to work out the details. In the meantime, I'd like to thank all the volunteers who have given so generously of their time to both of the projects. You have made a huge difference to the accessibility and understanding of our fascinating collections.

Shropshire Archives search room opening hours

Since we changed the opening hours in April 2014 we have had a range of feedback. One particular concern has been the limit on search room opening times from just 10am-2pm. We are currently looking at whether we can extend this at all, and hope to have a proposal very soon. We have also found that the search room has been very busy on some days, and are reviewing whether a booking system and some sort of restriction on numbers of items requested is necessary to ensure a fair and manageable service.

Oswestry Cemetery project

This Heritage Lottery funded project is also coming to a close in March 2015. Conservation work is now complete and the cataloguing work nearly finished thanks to a number of volunteers. The website is now up and running including a blog of fascinating stories about those buried in the cemetery see www.oswestrycemeteryproject.org.uk. This research will continue. We are also asking for volunteers as part of the Heritage Heroes project to help out with the transcription of photographs of the gravestones, see www.heritageheroes.org.uk.

Telford Our New Town project

We are currently working with colleagues from Telford & Wrekin libraries on this Heritage Lottery funded project. The project has created an outline catalogue for the very large Telford Development Corporation collection, with more details for the whole photograph collection, as well as digitising selected items which are accessible online and on table sized screens at the new Southwater Library in Telford Town Centre. Making information about one of our largest and most significant collections more accessible is a great step forward.

Sylvia Watts History Day (Saturday 18 April 2015)

A day to honour the life and work of Dr. Sylvia Watts, organised by Shifnal Local History Group. For further details contact Alan Cartwright, tel 01952 200646, email cartwright.alan@gmail.com

Friends of Shropshire Archives Summer events

Monday 1 June 2015, 2.30pm: Visit to Brynkinalt Hall, Chirk, Wrexham LL14 5NS

Tuesday 9 June 2015, 7pm: AGM and talk about the Corbetts of Wellington and Shrewsbury at the Perseverance Ironworks in Shrewsbury, now Morris Lubricants, 38-41 Castle Foregate, Shrewsbury SY1 2EL

Tuesday, 23 June 2015, 2.30pm: Visit to Hatton Grange, Shifnal TF11 9HS

Wednesday, 8 July 2015, 2.30pm: Guided walk around the River Severn in Shrewsbury with Dorothy Nicholle, meet at Frankwell Car Park, Shrewsbury SY3 8HQ

For further details see the new and improved Friends website at www.friendsofshropshirearchives.org.uk

Mary McKenzie

Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage Project – An introduction

The Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage Project began in 2012. Run within the Shropshire Council Archives and Museums services with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, matched with additional financial support from the Archaeological and Historical Society, Friends of Shropshire Archives, the Friends of Ludlow Museum, the Walker Trust, the Shropshire Family History Society and Shropshire Council itself, the Project has enjoyed contributions from over 400 volunteers in its three years of operation.

The Project set out to engage more volunteers with the County-run Archives and Museums services to the achievement of two broad benefits. First, like museums and archives across the country, Shropshire's facilities hold many thousands of items for which public access is restricted due to their not being catalogued. Once this has been undertaken (usually alongside conservation and digitisation), items are far easier to retrieve from stores, thus offering greater access. Additionally, in this internet age, the conserving, digitising and, finally, cataloguing process opens up collections to be interrogated through a variety of routes on-line. The second Project benefit was to provide opportunities for a broad range of volunteers to develop new skills, knowledge and confidence by enabling them "to celebrate their culture through the exploration of Shropshire's history and heritage".

To this end, individuals have variously volunteered to undertake work including conserving court papers and costume, digitising photographs and flints and cataloguing pamphlets and archaeological collections.

Tong Castle Excavation Archive

Before the M54 was built, a community led rescue excavation of the site at Tong Castle retrieved a large trove of artefacts dating from the post Conquest period (AD 1100) to Modern times. The range of objects found was wide, from medieval pottery cooking pots to iron spurs, from glazed medieval tiles to bones and building materials. Some have detailed context notes whilst others are less well documented. Many of the finds reflect the series of changes in domestic and military use from defensive Marcher castle to grand house. The finds also help to give a picture of the domestic life and contribute to our understanding of historical patterns of



Selection of medieval floor tiles from Tong including a unique example showing a horseshoe and nail (courtesy of Shropshire Museums Service)

trade and employment. Within the finds are some real gems, including rare local medieval tiles, a large range of cooking pots, interesting metalwork, preserved leather shoes, and even a clay pipe from Port Royal, Jamaica.

For many years a small collection of artefacts were loaned to the museum service for display, however, with the passing of many of the original excavation committee more and more of the finds have made their way into the museum collections. These have been at Ludlow Museum Resource Centre. Now, after 18 months of work, the majority of this collection has been sorted, cleaned, photographed and an interim catalogue produced – in short it is now in a state where it can be made available to both the public and professionals. The current items on display at Shrewsbury Museum, although interesting, are but a tiny proportion of what Tong has to offer – hopefully given the changes afoot within the museum service they will be available for all to access in the future.

Dick Hughes (Volunteer)

Lily Chitty Flint Collection Research Project.

When Lily Francis Chitty (LFC) died in 1979 she bequeathed her papers to the Local Studies Library. This collection comprised several thousand articles, letters, drawings and maps about the archaeology of Shropshire. These were organised into 831 files by Tony Carr, resulting in the catalogue published by Shropshire Records, in 1992. Soon after LFC's death Mary Chitty (LFC's sister in law herself an archaeologist) donated LFC's Collection of geological and archaeological artefacts to the Rowley House Museum.

A substantial part of LFC's Collection of artefacts was devoted to flints. These have been organised into 200 collections containing more than 1500 flints found between the 1920's and 1970's. The majority of these flints come from three areas of Shropshire, as do another 1000 which have not yet been organised into collections.

Since their deposition many people have used the flints to try and understand prehistory in Shropshire. However, all have struggled because of the difficulty of linking the



Child's leather shoe AD 1350-1450 (courtesy of Shropshire Museums Service)



Miss Chitty at White Abbey excavations (Alberbury) in February 1925 (courtesy of Shropshire Archives)

documentation, which provides the context with the material evidence. Consequently, the core importance of LFC's collection, to the prehistory of Shropshire, has not been realised.

The recent developments at Shrewsbury Museum have

meant that the Chitty collection of flints has now been transferred to the Museum Resource Centre in Ludlow. This means that for the first time in more than thirty years there is enough space, equipment and volunteers to study it properly. The current project, whilst drawing together the documentation and the artefacts, is also updating the descriptions of the flints to the current standards of archaeological classification and supplementing these with high resolution photographs. This information will eventually be available in the form of a searchable database that will make the complete collection publically accessible for the first time.



Barbed and tanged arrowhead from The Llan, Clunbury (Ludlow Resource Centre: Chitty Collection)

Two of us are working together to bring this project to fruition. Dr Alan Cartwright (retired academic) and Jack Rowe (recent archaeological graduate) – we are being assisted by Peter Reavill (Portable Antiquities Scheme).

Alan Cartwright and Jack Rowe (Volunteers)

As an aside – if any society members are aware of a flint specialist with the initials NS who worked for a substantial time on the Chitty archive in Shrewsbury during the 1980's or early 90's could they please let the museum know. There are over 200 pages of detailed notes on the flints by NS and it would be good to acknowledge their work within the project.

Significant achievements made through volunteering

The Volunteering for Shropshire's Heritage Project draws to a close in April 2015. In the three years of its operation the following key statistics will have been achieved across the County's Archives and Museums services:

Over 15,000 records and objects will have been conserved

Over 60,000 records and objects will have been digitised

Over 120,000 records and objects will have been catalogued

These significant achievements have been made through the dedication and skills of our body of volunteers who will have given over 8000 days of their time. Hats off to them!

Michael Turner

*Project Manager for Volunteering for Shropshire Heritage
Shropshire Archives February 2015*

Notes from the finds desks of the Portable Antiquities Scheme

Hello, my name is Victoria, and I am the Headley Trust Intern for the PAS in the West Midlands. I have been working with Peter Reavill at the Ludlow Museum and Resource Centre since October 2014. Together with Peter, I will be bringing you this edition of notes from the finds desk. During my time with the PAS I have had the opportunity to handle numerous objects, photograph them and research their history, with the final stage of adding a new record to the database. Another great experience has been assisting Peter in teaching a lesson on prehistory in which local primary school children were able to handle Neolithic flints and Bronze Age hand tools and pottery. The school visits and the opportunity to write articles such as this have been fun and made the internship experience varied. My time with the scheme both as a volunteer and intern has given me the confidence to apply for museum positions and also validated my wish to pursue a career working with artefacts either in the archaeological field or based in a museum.



My favourite newly recorded object is an Early Medieval stirrup strap mount. I have chosen this particular object as it is the first of its sub-type to be recorded on the database from Shropshire. I personally like the Scandinavian inspired imagery of the human face with its large eyes, and imagine when new it would have looked very striking on the side of a horse.

Early Medieval stirrup strap mount discovered in the Newport Area, Shropshire (PAS record: HESH-2205D1)



This stirrup strap mount dates to the Early Medieval period circa (AD 1000 - 1100). The front face of the mount depicts a human mask in low relief. The face comprises pointed oval eyes and a protruding nose, mouth and chin. This sub-type shows elements of influence from Late Viking Ringerike and Urnes decoration styles. The broad distribution for this style of strap mount shows a significant leaning towards Southern England and East Anglia and this example is an extreme outlier to that pattern being the most northerly mount known.

The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/662074>

The following artefacts have been identified as special finds of note: they have all been discovered in the Shropshire area:

Early Bronze Age flat axe discovered from Sheriffhales Area, Shropshire (PAS record: HESH-3AFE67)

This is a developed flat axe with hammer raised flanges of later Early Bronze Age date (c. 2000 - 1700 BC). The axehead is broadly sub rectangular in plan with a splayed crescent shaped blade. The cutting edge of the axe is lost and the crescentic blade shape is irregular with one side being rounder than the other. This irregularity seems to be more through use rather than through surface corrosion or abrasion. There is no evidence of decoration on any surface of the axe. The axehead is best described as coming from the Arreton type of long-flanged developed flat axes.



The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/640651>

Late Iron Age brooch discovered in the Caynham Area, Shropshire

(PAS record: HESH-B7DED5)

A near complete cast copper alloy late Iron Age La Tène II style brooch, dating to the period c. 300 - 200 BC. The overall shape of the brooch is formed from three interlocking / conjoining circular hoops, within each hoop is a saltire cross formed of spokes emanating from a central projecting boss or knop. The overall form is shaped like a wheel of which similar examples can be seen on wheel like votive models and miniature objects similar to examples recorded from Shrewsbury, Shropshire.



The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/649891>

Late Medieval to Post Medieval copper mortar discovered in the parish of Eyton upon the Weald Moors, Shropshire (PAS record: HESH-4FO0A1)

A large fragment from the side wall of a relatively thick copper alloy cast vessel, most probably a mortar of later medieval date or post medieval (AD 1400 - 1700). The exterior surface of the mortar is decorated with a repeating pattern comprising a series of interlocking arcs that form an arcade with diamond shaped patterns, fleur-de-lis and five petalled flowers. Two mortars with similar arcade like designs are recorded from the Whitechapel Foundry, London. The first is by the founder William Carter (1610-1616) and is dated 1615. This mortar has a band of similar decoration. The second mortar with similar design was from the founder James Bartlet (1675-1700) and on

a mortar dated 1689. It is therefore suggested that this mortar fragment dates from the 17th Century. The finder has very kindly donated this find to Ludlow Museum / Shropshire Museum Service who hold one of the largest collections of late medieval metal mortars in the country.

The full PAS record can be found here: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/643458>

Early Medieval gold ring from the South Shropshire area (PAS record HESH-B61048)

Ludlow Museum has recently acquired with the help of the Art fund, the friends of Ludlow Museum and the Shropshire Historical and Archaeological Society (i.e. you) a post Roman gold ring.

The ring was discovered in 2012 by a metal detectorist in South Shropshire. It has not been possible to identify any parallels in Roman period gold, therefore the probable date is Early Medieval (circa AD 410 – 750). The ring has undergone surface metal analysis at the British Museum, this indicated an approximate gold content for the ring of 93%, a silver content of approximately 6% and a copper content of approximately 1%. Roger White has suggested that this is “the only prestige piece of Brittonic Dark Age metalwork to have been found in the county”. The ring is now on display at Ludlow Museum and Resource Centre, moving to its new home at the New Ludlow Museum at the Buttercross in Ludlow town centre soon.



The full PAS record can be found here: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/516447>

Victoria Allnatt: *Portable Antiquities Scheme Ludlow Museum Resource Centre, February 2014*

A silver spoon from Pentrehyling fort.

The next volume of Shropshire Archaeology and History is largely to be devoted to the excavations that were carried out between 1977 and 1998 at the Roman fort at Pentrehyling, on the Shropshire / Montgomeryshire border, and on the nearby campaign forts at Brompton Farm. These excavations were carried out as a summer digs by the Central Marches Archaeological Research Group (CAMARG) under John Allen between these dates until John's unexpected death immediately before the 1998 excavation. My involvement with the project came about via the participation of the Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU). In 1989-91, the unit was commissioned by Shropshire County Council to carry out excavations in advance of road widening on the A489 which traverses the fort on its long axis. Both excavations took place in the era before the time when writing up was automatically included in the cost of excavation so English Heritage funded the post-excavation side of the project,

which for the past 15 years I have been trying to bring to fruition.

The reason why English Heritage were keen to fund the report is that it produced high quality evidence for pottery and other finds from a closely dated context, but also important and rare evidence for the industrial processing of lead ore for the extraction of silver through the process of cupellation. Only three or four sites from the whole of Britain have produced evidence of this kind, and it is confirmation that the ores in Shropshire were rich enough to extract silver.

The purpose of this note, however, is to highlight another find of exceptional interest from the site. During the road widening phase of the excavation the BUFAU team recovered a late Roman silver spoon from a stratified ditch fill of the fort.



The silver spoon from Pentrehyling fort

It was found in association with one or two sherds of pottery and a coin of the later members of the House of Constantine. This dates the deposition of the spoon to around the mid fourth century. Silver spoons of the late Empire are not uncommon finds in Britain, but they are rare as a site find like this as opposed to being found in a hoard, such as those at Thetford or Hoxne, in Norfolk and Suffolk respectively. Roman spoons at this late period came in two forms: the so-called rat-tailed spoon like this example, with its long tapering straight handle and pointed end, and the duck-headed type which has a larger, oval bowl and a looped handle terminated with a ducks head. The bowls of both spoons are often decorated with pictures but also with lettering, as this one is. Here the legend, partly worn away by use, reads UTERE FELIX VIVAS – Use [this] happily and live [long !] This is a common inscription found on many objects, precious or otherwise, at this time. From the Hoxne hoard, for instance, the phrase UTERE FELIX DOMINA JULIANA (Use this happily, Lady Juliana) is cut into a fretwork (opus interrasile) bracelet of gold, while a unique openwork bronze dice tower (from Vettweiss-Froitzeim villa in Germany) has UTERE FELIX VIVAS at the top of three sides, while, on the front, is a delightful message designed to reassure its users: PICTOS VICTOS; HOSTES DELITA; LUDITE SECURI – ‘The Picts are vanquished; the enemies are destroyed; we play in safety’.

While there is nothing overtly Christian about the Pentrehyling spoon’s inscription, the phrase is used in Christian contexts and is often taken to be an allusion to the hope of eternal life in Christ expressed by Christians. If such a connotation can be put on this spoon, not implausibly, since it post-dates the Edict of Milan, then it would be the first ever evidence for Christians in Roman Shropshire. The spoon will be handed over, with much of the archive, to the county museum service shortly and will hopefully find its rightful place in the new museum display. The remainder of the archive, that element excavated by John Allen’s group, will be handed over to the owners of the fort and will partly be put on display there.

Roger White

A Shropshire Avalanche*

In the church at Wentnor, to the west of the Long Mynd, the ‘hurricane stone’ records the death, at 9am on 2nd February 1772, of three members of the Perkins family and four others in a ‘hurricane of wind and snow’ which had ‘blown away’ house and occupants and buried them in snow so deep that they could not be found that day. Seven more had been buried but survived. The disaster occurred at Asterton (NGR: SO398913) a village located right below the abrupt western slope of the Long Mynd at a point where a short stream emerges from a steep-sided hollow in the hill.



Wentnor ‘hurricane’ stone

In 1772 the word ‘avalanche’ did not exist in English so could not be used to describe the event but study of the site and research, mainly at the Shropshire Archives and in contemporary newspapers, has shown that this ‘hurricane’ was, in fact, an avalanche.

The coroner’s inquest verdict on these deaths makes it clear that this was an avalanche - ‘in a few moments four Houses...were laid waste by an Inundation of Snow which came rolling violently out of the Dingle in which four women and three men...were Suffocated, Smothered and Killed...’ (Shropshire Archives QR 83/28). Some died in their beds, others in the open, as the day started in this farming community.

On the day before the avalanche (1st February 1772) there was a great snow storm and high winds across the Midlands – roads were blocked, some travellers froze to death on the roads (including a man near Much Wenlock) and houses were buried in snow. A great accumulation of snow must have built up in the hollow above Asterton where the angles of the slopes – some over 35° - are sufficient for an avalanche to start and for the snow to be channelled down the narrow valley to the village. There the damage caused was typical of an avalanche: four houses in its track were destroyed but nearby houses were undamaged.



Asterton hollow from the top

After the 1836 Lewis (Sussex) avalanche where eight died, it appears that this Shropshire avalanche is the most deadly recorded in the British Isles. The Manchester Mercury reported on 27th February 1772 that ‘Upwards of 200 men have been digging in the snow for several Days past to find the dead Bodies’.

Mike Nurse

References: In particular Shropshire Archives documents including QR83/28, QR83/19, P296/U/1/38 and February 1772 editions of the Oxford Journal, Aris’s Birmingham Gazette and the Manchester Mercury.

*A much fuller version of this fascinating story will appear in the *South West Shropshire Historical and Archaeological Society Journal*, Volume 26 (Summer 2015)

Update from James Lawson re: article on Berwick House and Chapel

(Newsletter No. 76, Autumn 2013)

On the subject of 'Worcestershire marble': the jury is still out, but it is likely to be 'Ledbury Marble' to be found on the Eastnor Castle estate and which was used for some fireplaces at Eastnor Castle ca. 1800. However I can see no connection between Smith of Warwick and Ledbury.

During the 19th century it was said to be grey but modern descriptions are more exotic: 'mottled red, purple, white and blue' a coral-crinoid-rich Silurian limestone. My source says to be found in local country houses and churches and used for flooring. No examples given.

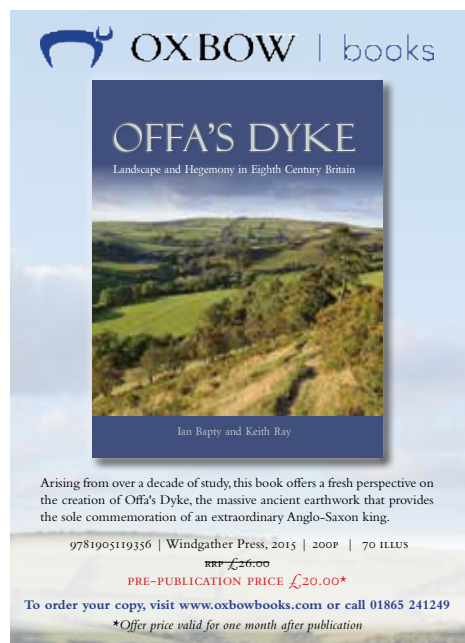
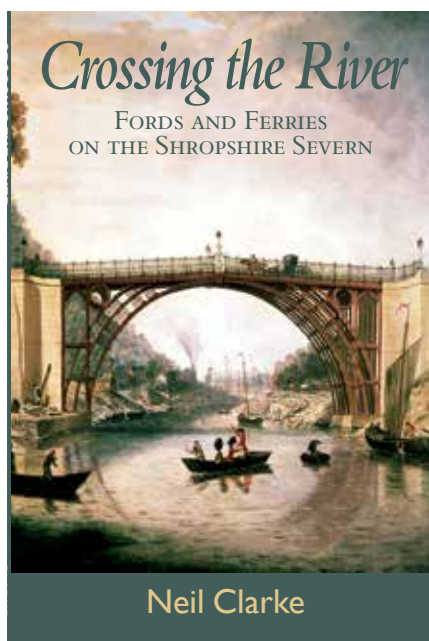
Murchison's *Silurian System* (p.413) says: 'prevailing colour bluish and dark grey veined with white' but some strata pink or even red.

Haughmond Abbey excavations report: English Heritage has just published the long awaited *Haughmond Abbey: Excavation of a 12th-century cloister in its historical and landscape context* by J. J. West and Nicholas Palmer. The published price is £100.00, but E.H. is considering offering the work at a discount price (not yet specified) to members of our Society. When the discount, and the timetable within which it will be offered, are decided, I will notify e-mailable members immediately.

Any member whom I can't e-mail (not having e-mail or not having notified me of an e-address) should write to me (my postal address is in the *Transactions* prelims) expressing an interest in receiving news of the discount offer, and notification will be posted

George Baugh

Two new books covering different aspects of Shropshire's history will be available shortly:



Copy deadline for the autumn 2015 Newsletter is Friday 31st July 2015. Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter Editor at 7 Elstree Close, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9QF or emailed to shelagh228@msn.com



SHROPSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY NEWSLETTER

Shropshire
Archaeological
and
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Society
No. 80, Autumn 2015

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SOCIETY NEWS

AGM: The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society will be held at The Shirehall, Shrewsbury on Saturday 19th September 2015 at 2.00pm. The AGM will be followed by a talk on ***The Place-Names of Shropshire*** by Dr John Baker, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Name-Studies at Nottingham University. Since 2013 John has been part of a team, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, which has been working to complete the English Place-Name Society's survey Shropshire begun by the late Margaret Gelling in the 1960s. The project is due for completion by 2017.

Chairmanship: Our Chairman, James Lawson, will be stepping down from office at the 2015 AGM after giving stalwart service for many years. Should any member wish to stand for election as Chair or nominate a fellow-member for the position (only with the permission of the person being nominated) please send details by post or email to the Secretary: G C Baugh, Glebe House, Vicarage Road, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9EZ or E: georgebaugh@gmail.com. Please ensure that any nominations arrive in time to be considered at the AGM on Saturday 19th September 2015.

Transactions Editorship: Canon William Price has also decided to step down, at the end of 2015 / early part of 2016, as Editor of the Society's *Transactions*, having served for over twelve years. During that time he has managed to clear a considerable backlog (no easy task) ensuring a smooth start for his successor. We are pleased to announce that Mrs Jenny Britnell formerly of the **Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust** has agreed to take on the task.

Meetings Group: Dr David Poyner will be resigning from Council at the 2015 AGM having chaired the Meetings Group for a number of years during which the group has contributed greatly to the benefits of membership with the production of interesting and varied programmes of talks and events. Please contact the *Newsletter* editor if you would like to join the group or offer suggestions for talk topics, speakers or events.

Subscriptions and Mailings: Subscription rates are now £19.00 for Ordinary Members and £20.00 for Family Membership (two or more people living at the same address). Institutional Membership is £20.00 and Overseas Membership £23.00. Please remember to update any out-of-date standing orders and to fill in a Gift Aid Declaration Form if you are a UK taxpayer.

Pagett Fund Grant: A grant of £100 from the Pagett Fund has been made to the Whitchurch Museum towards the purchase of the second of a pair of ninth-century silver, highly decorated, hooked tags found at Prees near Whitchurch. The museum already has the first tag in its possession and it is hoped that the pair will be reunited by September for the first time in over 1000 years.

Christmas Social: Members are reminded that the Christmas Social, this year, will take place at the Flax Mill on Saturday 12th December 2015 at 2.30pm. Full details in the **Meetings Programme** which accompanies this *Newsletter*.

Shropshire Archives News July 2015

20 years at Castle Gates

In July we celebrated 20 years at the Castle Gates building. The new Shropshire Records and Research Centre, as it was then called, was formally opened on 24 July 1995. Those of us who were part of the team then find it difficult to believe it has been 20 years, though in many ways the service has been transformed especially with the use of new technology. Computers were just being introduced to the workplace in 1995 and the centre was one of the first new Shropshire County Council buildings to have an integrated IT network. Our customers only had access to one dumb terminal with the library catalogue on it, some of you will remember the screens with a black background and green typefaces.

Things are very different now with over 350,000 records online as well as images of Shropshire parish registers available through *Findmypast*. Throughout the 20 years, we have relied on the support of members of the Friends many of whom volunteer for the service. We couldn't have achieved what we have without you. Although we currently face unprecedented financial pressures, we look forward to the opportunities of the next 20 years.

Shropshire Archives search room opening hours

Changes to the search room opening hours on Wednesdays to 4pm are going well and seem to be appreciated by customers. We are also encouraging customers as much as possible to order documents in advance – this makes the running of the public service more efficient. Thanks very much for your co-operation with this.

World War One projects

Planning is now underway for further World War One commemoration activity from 2017 culminating in commemorations to mark the centenary of the death of Wilfred Owen in October 2018. We are working closely with Alexa Pugh Arts Development Officer to seek funding for a wide range of arts and heritage projects to support activity across the county.

Shropshire Victoria County History

I am delighted to be part of plans to revive the Victoria County History in Shropshire and am looking forward to the launch in October. For more details contact Victoria County History Director Professor Richard Hoyle, Richard.Hoyle@sas.ac.uk

Events

Thursday 10 September 2015, 11am and 2pm, Shropshire Archives

Behind the scenes tours of Shropshire Archives, free but booking essential, tel: 0345 678 9096, email archives@shropshire.gov.uk

Monday 5 October 2015, 2.30pm, Shropshire Archives.
Friends of Shropshire Archives Annual lecture, *Military Conflicts through Artefacts, Letters, Postcards and Family History* by Graham Bradbury. An insight into the Napoleonic, Crimean, South African and North West

Frontier conflicts as well as the Great War. The talk includes a range of historic items and documents, and discusses research methods. £5

email patkl@blueyonder.co.uk for tickets

Monday 23 November, 10.30am, Shropshire Archives

Talk on the 1939 register by Myko Clelland of *Findmypast*, free but booking essential, tel: 0345 678 9096, email archives@shropshire.gov.uk

Courses

A range of courses and talks at Shropshire Archives is planned for Autumn 2015-Spring 2016.

English Palaeography 2-4 pm Tuesday 15 September for 6 weeks. Cost £37

Latin for Local and Family Historians 2-4 pm Tuesday 1 March for 6 weeks. Cost £37

Researching Family History 2-4 pm Tuesday 3 November for 5 weeks. Cost £32

Canal History 2-4 pm Monday 22 February for 5 weeks. Cost £32

Gordon Dickins talks:

Falling in love with Tess Durbeyfield 2-3.30pm, Monday 8 Feb, £3.50 and

Inspired by Shropshire 2-3.30pm, Monday 11 April, £3.50

For further details and to book a place email museumeducation@shropshire.gov.uk, tel: 01743 258881

Mary Mckenzie

Heritage, Crafts and a Cup of Tea



In 2012 members of the Newport History Society fulfilled a long held ambition, to open a Heritage Centre in Newport. The Town Council allowed the Society to use the unoccupied front room of 3a (part of the Newport Guildhall) rent free, to display archaeological artefacts discovered by the Societies Field-group, along with photographs and documents relating to the history of the town and surrounding villages. On Saturday the 21st June 2012 the Newport Heritage Centre opened its doors for the first time. The plan was to open on Saturdays from 10am until 2pm. The Centre would be staffed by volunteers from the History Society, who would talk to the general public about the displays and where possible

identify historical artefacts found by members of the public. In the first year 3a, as it became known received 1406 visitors. This was deemed a success by all involved and the council agreed to let the History Society to continue using 3a rent free, until the council elections in 2015, after which the project would be reviewed. In 2014 the number of visitors to 3a increased, with 1475 people visiting the Heritage Centre. However, the Council were now facing large cuts in funding and the town councillors informed the History Society that it would need to start paying rent for its continued use of 3a. Unable to raise funds to pay the rent, it looked as though the Heritage Centre would have to close its doors. It was at this point, that Tim Pryce became involved. Tim had set up a 'Pop Up Shop' at No2 Wellington Road. The shop had proved popular and soon became a recognised part of the towns High Street. Unfortunately, the landlord found a new tenant and as a result Tim needed to find alternative premises. It was suggested by members of the town council that the History Society and Tim share 3a. In January 2015, Tim Pryce offered to take on the lease for 3a, resolving the financial issues.



Today visitors to 'Newport Central' can see and purchase locally produced crafts and produce, or relax and have a cup of tea and a slice of home-made cake surrounded by display cabinets, filled with locally discovered archaeological treasures. The current displays feature artefacts from the early Mesolithic Period right through to the present day, over 6000 years. Displays are updated and regularly changed throughout the year, with a digital monitor providing information relating to the artefacts exhibited. The jewel in the crown, as far as the historical displays are concerned, is the 'Sheriffhales Roman Coin Hoard'. Found on the 2nd of August 2009 by Mr Terry Hayward. A total of 86 bronze coins were recovered, dating from the reign of the Vespasian (69-79AD) to the reign of Antoninus Pius (138-169AD).

Newport's 'Heart of England in Bloom' group are also now based in 'Newport Central'. The group will have information available on how to get involved with activities, such as planting up and maintaining flowerbeds situated around the town, along with a display of trophies and awards won by the group in previous years. Members of 'Heart of England in Bloom' will be available to talk to

the general public in 'Newport Central' every 3rd Saturday of the month, from 10am until 2pm, see press for details or pop in and say hello and find out for yourself what 'Newport Central' is all about.

Julian Meeson

Speaking up for archaeology

It is impossible to imagine archaeology in the UK today without the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). Since its foundation in 1944, the CBA has



led the way with ground-breaking projects and innovative resources, sharing research, knowledge and opening up archaeology to new generations and new audiences. Above all, the CBA and its partners have worked tirelessly to represent the interests of everyone who cares about the UK's rich archaeology heritage and the future of our discipline.

They actively work with a range of partners to shape government policy around issues threatening the future of our historic environment.

The CBA's advocacy work over the years has included:

- Championing archaeology in the planning system (the new National Planning Policy Framework in England includes a specific section on the historic environment)
- Better systems for safeguarding portable antiquities (the 1996 Treasure Act followed active CBA lobbying, and the Portable Antiquities Scheme has a key role to play)
- Enhanced protection for wreck sites from looters and commercial salvage (new UK Government policy forbids all commercial exploitation of wrecks)
- Pushing for archaeology to be included in the formal education curriculum (prehistory was recently added to the National Curriculum in England)

They continue to push for enhanced safeguarding of landscapes, sites, building and antiquities and to promote opportunities for public engagement.

Supporting local action:

The involvement of local people in debates over ongoing cuts to local archaeological services, and how their local historic environment is protected, is more important now than ever. The CBA's Local Heritage Engagement Network (LHEN) project, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, supports local groups across the UK who look after and protect the historic environment on their doorsteps.

They are working with a number of key partners to raise awareness and respond to consultations about funding cuts, including the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME), the Association of Local Government Archaeological officers UK (ALGAO), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and Civic Voice.

Making the case for listed buildings:

As one of the few national amenity societies consulted on

proposals for alteration wherever demolition is involved, the CBA receive up to 4,000 listed building applications from England and Wales each year. They defend the archaeological significance of buildings and sites, giving a unique and vital voice to building types that may not otherwise be considered. They work with volunteer agents from local societies and historic buildings groups.

Your support is vital



What you may not know about the CBA, is that their core funding source has been withdrawn. Next year will be their first without the funding that has been in place since they were founded in the 1940s. The result is that they have a third less money to sustain our vital advocacy work and participation programmes.

The CBA's campaigning role is more vital now than ever with increasing threats to our archaeological heritage from development pressures and the effects of funding cutbacks on archaeology practice here in the UK. Many archaeologists argue that we are at risk of losing all that we have gained over the past 70 years.

As such the CBA is launching a major appeal to everyone who cares about the future for archaeology in the UK. Support from CBA members and supporters will provide a stable foundation so the Council for British Archaeology can continue to resource our campaigning and advocacy work, projects and programmes.

To find out what you can do to help support the CBA and the future of archaeology go to

www.archaeologymatters.org.uk or call them on 01904 671417 for an appeal pack

Old Oswestry Hillfort



Old Oswestry from the air (courtesy of Alistair Reid)

It is not very often that archaeology in Shropshire makes National headlines, but the case of housing development proposals close to the major monument at Old Oswestry has made it to the national press and radio. A local pressure group 'Hands off Our Old Oswestry Hillfort' has carried out an effective campaign against the proposed development that, they argue, will so adversely affect it.

No-one involved – including Shropshire Council and Historic England – doubts the importance of the site so surely any development in the area should be automatically turned down, and yet it hasn't been. Why is this so?

Two factors need to be highlighted in answering this question. The first is that this is the first serious test of the government's new planning policy brought in as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; 2012). This sought to perpetuate the heritage benefits brought in by earlier planning guidance documents from 1990 onwards, but also to simplify and facilitate swifter planning decisions. Thus, what happens at Old Oswestry is not just of significance to Shropshire: it sets a precedent for what might happen to similar planning permissions elsewhere in England. That is why the government appears determined not to back down over this case.

The second factor is the extremely awkward position in which local authorities, in this case Shropshire Council, are being put. In short, all councils have been set housing targets by government. These houses have to be built somewhere and, in a county like Shropshire, it is more than likely that a relatively high proportion of those places will be on greenfield rather than brownfield (i.e. previously developed) land.

This is ultimately why the Planning Inspector has decided to retain the allocation of this site in the plan. In line with NPPF, the benefits to the local community of providing more housing are deemed to outweigh the vociferous objections of many of those very locals, and their supporters from all over the country. This is a conclusion that should concern anyone interested in preserving the county's heritage, as this society is committed to do. In this light, the caveats imposed by the Inspector are interesting. The housing scheme "should demonstrate appropriate regard to the significance and setting of the Old Oswestry Hill Fort" which includes working with archaeologists to ensure that the long-distance views to and from Old Oswestry are not compromised. This is an important concession which will minimise the impact should permission be granted, and it is worth noting in this context that the scale of the development has been considerably scaled back to 117 houses in total (contrast this with the 1,417 houses to be built elsewhere in Oswestry or the 27,500 new houses that Shropshire Council are expected to approve by 2016). While the protesters seem to have lost the argument, in fact they have undoubtedly affected the outcome, albeit not as much as they had wished. The moral is surely that the battle is still worth the fight.

Roger White

Survey at Caus Castle

A magnetometer survey has recently been undertaken within the outer bailey of Caus Castle, focused on the medieval borough associated with the castle (centred on SJ 337 078). This was a pilot programme of work, to assess the survival of subsurface archaeological remains, potentially associated with the borough, which might respond to magnetic survey. As a pilot project, it was intended that the survey formed an initial assessment of the potential of the site for further non-intrusive survey and highlight areas where further fieldwork would be best targeted.

The documentary evidence for the borough of Caus is well known and has been briefly summarised by the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey (Buteux, 1996). The castle itself is thought to have been built by Roger fitz Corbet in the late 11th or early 12th century taking the name from his ancestral home in Normandy, but the first documentary reference dates to 1140 (Buteux, 1996: 2). The focus of the present survey was the borough of Caus, a town which developed within a rampart to the north and west of the castle site. King John granted a market charter on 10 April 1200, to Robert Corbet, with the charter for a fair granted in 1248 (Letters, nd). The town expanded through the 13th and 14th centuries, with 28 burgages recorded in 1274, 34 in 1300 and 58 in 1349 (Buteux, 1996: 2). Caus began to decline in the second half of the 14th and 15th centuries. The last recorded house is mentioned in 1614. The borough was surrendered to Parliament in 1645 (Shropshire HER PRN 00249).

Documentary evidence makes reference to a number of buildings known with the borough. These include the chapel of St. Nicholas, founded in the 12th or 13th century, still furnished in 1612 and probably used as a domestic chapel until the destruction of the castle (PRN 05106). This has traditionally been located as opposite the inner gate of the castle. In addition, the chapel of St. Margaret has been recorded from documentary sources as founded in 1272 and last recorded in 1447, although its location is unclear (PRN 05107). The main interior street, running between East Gate and Wallop Gate was recorded as still in use as part of a field road in 1816 (VCH 1968, 310). It survives, in part on site, as a discontinuous earthwork.

The results of the survey were promising, although no clear in situ building remains/structural deposits have been identified. The main set of anomalies detected in the survey relate to a series of trackways, lengths of which are evident as extant holloways, running roughly NE-SW across the site. In addition, a number of weaker magnetic anomalies have been recorded, which may well represent further disturbed building material across the site, some of it potentially in situ. Further survey work is anticipated, to include topographic survey of the complex earthworks in the outer bailey. A survey report has been lodged with Shropshire Historic Environment Record.

Giles Carey

The author is grateful to Historic England (formerly English Heritage) for loan of equipment, and to approving the Section 42 license to carry out the survey, to Penny Ward for her help on site and Mervyn Roberts for permission to carry out the survey on his land.

References:

Buteux, V (1996): *Archaeological assessment of Caus, Shropshire* (Central Marches Historic Towns Survey report)

Letters, S (nd): *Gazeteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1515*

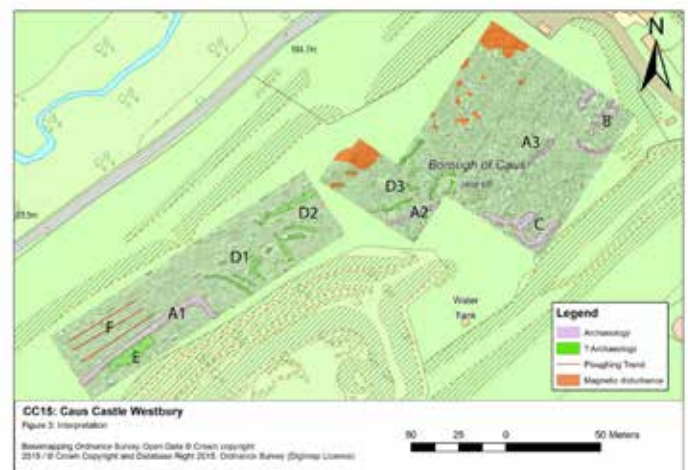
<http://www.history.ac.uk/cmh/gaz/gazweb2.html>

(accessed 28.04.2015)

VCH (1968): *The Victoria County History of Shropshire* 8 295-332



Digital Elevation Model of Google Earth satellite photograph, showing the survey results in topographic context [Geophysical Survey data overlain on Google Earth image, floated on ASCII LiDAR DSM (from Geomatics Group). Viewed from NNW, 1.4x vertical exaggeration].



Interpretation plot overlaid on greyscale image. [Basemapping: Ordnance Survey Open Data © Crown Copyright and Database Right 2015]

Researching North Shropshire's 'marsh-forts'

The term 'marsh-fort' has only come into usage relatively recently and describes unusual, very low-lying, monumental Iron Age fortifications in a wetland setting; they are a scarce monument type and most are still classified under the generic shorthand of 'hillforts'. They are under-researched and, so far, the term has been used mainly with reference to the Iron Age double enclosure of Sutton Common near Doncaster.

Around the North Shropshire meres and mosses are several marsh-fort candidates, and these are the focus of my research for a PhD in landscape and palaeoenvironmental archaeology at the University of Birmingham. Wall Camp (HER 1108; Scheduled Monument 1020282) on the Weald Moors is one such – a 12ha multivallate fortification surrounded by peat-based farmland (Malim and Malim: TSAHS LXXXV (2010) 81-114.

Equally intriguing is The Berth near Baschurch (HER 129; Scheduled Monument 1004770) which comprises two upstanding Iron Age enclosures, within a very low-lying peat basin, linked to each other and to higher ground by interconnecting causeways. Excavations in the 1960s

revealed floors, post holes, ceramics and salt containers and finds include an Iron Age glass bead and a copper-alloy cauldron. The structure of the site has similarities with Sutton Common which has been characterised as more likely to be of ritual than domestic usage.



Berth cauldron currently on display at Shrewsbury Museum (@British Museum)

The surrounding peat deposits make The Berth especially attractive for palaeoenvironmental investigation as the basin (which is almost permanently waterlogged) provides ideal conditions for the preservation of organic deposits. A coring and sampling programme, undertaken during 2014/2015, revealed peat to a depth of 6.8m overlying glacial clay and early environmental analysis indicates that the area was likely to have been fen-carr and reed swamp from the early Holocene; the Iron Age has been located at 1.5m – 1.8m (by radiocarbon dating). Future landscape reconstruction will include mapping the basin to determine whether the peat depth is uniform. This will allow me to estimate whether the enclosures would have been permanently surrounded by water.



Environmental sampling at The Berth (November 2014)

I look forward to providing the SAHS with updates as my research progresses.

My ongoing thanks go to the landowners for giving me access to their sites. If anyone was a volunteer at the excavations led by Peter Gelling in the 1960s, I would be very keen to hear from you!

Shelagh Norton

E: smn203@bham.ac.uk

Church Stretton Area Local History Group

The group was founded in response to a successful bid from the Heritage Lottery funded project for excavations and research into Rectory Wood, a historic park in the centre of Church Stretton. The parkland was once part of the grandest houses in the town and was the subject of research because of the evidence of old buildings. The area had clearly been landscaped and local legend had it that Capability Brown also may have influenced the design as he was a friend of the Rector.

We are a small group, current membership about 30, whose main subject is the local area but we also exist to support each other and anyone else in any aspects of history research. At the moment the group has three main themes, public talks, research projects and in the summer months visits to local sites of historical interest.

The first public talks were given by members on the topics of their personal interest, Hand Cut Nail Trade, Brown Clee Hill, the Workhouse, the Long Mynd etc. Recently we have expanded our horizons to include other speakers and topics though we try to keep a local or at least regional aspect.

Our first research project was prompted by the 150 year anniversary of opening of the school in 2011, the building is now the library. The general theme of 'Early Education in the Strettons' gave us a wide target for research and gave some of us our first introduction to Shropshire Archives.

At the end of the project we showed our result in an exhibition in the school building. The day was a success with about 200 people coming to see it.

The second research project was in 2014 and part of the celebrations marking the 800 year anniversary of Church Stretton receiving its market charter. As there are very few original documents from that time which are specific to The Strettons the project had to be a general work on life in medieval Shropshire. Some of the topics we covered were language and literature, childhood, Brockhurst Castle, rabbits, place names, St Lawrence, women and work, music, illness and landscape history.



Berth cauldron currently on display at Shrewsbury Museum (@British Museum)

Like many local history groups our present project is on World War One. We are just at the beginning of a four year project but our first thoughts are to keep the project very local and try to build a picture of how the war changed daily life here in the Strettons. We would also like to use the names on the Roll of Honour and the War Memorials to build profiles of those who went to war.

Finally, we probably would not have achieved as much or kept the group alive without all the help we have received from Shropshire Archives and Shropshire Library service.

Barbara Parnell

CSALHG@outlook.com

The Stallsman

Recently a tin box of old papers that was found in an outhouse in Chelmarsh was given to Shropshire Archives. They are wages slips belonging to J.E. Link (John Ernest Link) who worked at Highley Colliery. They cover the period from 1935-1940 and they shed light on the work of the miners at that period.

At Highley the coal would be undercut by a machine along a stretch of 25 or more yards; this was the coal face. The miners were organised in teams, each responsible for a portion of the face called a stall; perhaps 6 or so yards long. They had to break the coal down and load it into small railway wagons called tubs to be sent out of the pit. Not all men did the same job. Some were loaders; they had to shovel the broken coal into the tubs. The more skilled task was to get the coal off the face (with explosives if needed) and then break it into lumps that could be shovelled into the tubs. This was the job of the pikesmen. In the 1930s the pikesman would earn a basic of 8/10⁴ per shift against a loader's basic of 7/6². However, neither loader nor pikesman was usually paid directly by the Highley Mining Company; they actually worked for one or more subcontractor who was responsible for the working of the stall. These men were called stallsmen; they were paid by the Highley Mining Company for the coal they got from the stall at an agreed rate. From this they would pay the pikesmen and loaders their basic, plus whatever bonus they decided and would keep the rest themselves. Mr Link was a stallsman; he shared No 5 stall at Highley with Hubert Waldron. At the start of the week they would have to judge how much coal they could get from their stall; this would depend on the exact geology they would encounter during the course of the week. Having decided that, they would agree with the deputy (the foreman) how many men they needed.

To take one random example of a wages slip, that for the 28th February 1939 shows that they were working in a very good place, for they raised 145 tons of coal and nearly 9 tons of slack, for which they got 1/10 per ton. To keep their stall safe and easy to work, they needed to build 7 roof supports (chocks), for which they were paid 1/3 each. During the week they drove 10 yards of new road, as the face advanced. This gave the basic payment which was

then multiplied by various percentages which reflected past pay rises agreed since 1912; the most recent was a 1/- a day rise won in 1936. Against this, the stallsmen was charged for all explosives and detonators used in blasting the coal down, the cost of sharpening tools, a payment towards the cost of the Welfare ground, a sum for medical insurance and also unemployment insurance. There was also a deduction of ½d for every ton of coal to pay the checkweighman; this was a person nominated by the miners to work alongside the company clerk, to ensure that all the coal was weighed fairly.

The pay slip shows that Messrs Link and Waldron were paid £29-4-7½. This was shared between themselves and 9 other men who worked in their stall. This was an exceptional week; normally they employed only 4 others. It looks like not every man worked all the theoretical maximum of 5¾ shifts in the week as only 50½ shifts were worked in total. On average each member of the team would earn just over £3; although if the stallsmen had done their calculations correctly they would hope to see nearer £4 as their profit. To get this money, each man had moved 3¾ tons of coal a shift. They would have done this on their knees, working in a height of 3'9"; the money would have been well earned.

David Poyner



Council for
British Archaeology
West Midlands

CBAWM – Grant Fund

CBA West Midlands is pleased to announce that we have now launched our Annual Grant Fund. This aims to support projects within the West Midlands region that work towards the same aims as CBAWM and can contribute to the archaeology of the region.

Full guidelines on the Grant Fund, including qualifying criteria and the application process, can be found online at <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbawm/grants.php>

As the scheme will run alongside the subscription year of CBAWM (the financial year), for this launch year there will be a short introductory period where applications can be made for an award in September 2015.

Please note that the closing date for applications for this is 31st August 2015.

Victoria County History in Shropshire

The interest created by the publication last summer of VCH Shropshire VI, Shrewsbury part one, suggested that the moment was ripe to canvass support for the re-establishment of VCH in the county after a decade or more largely in abeyance. A meeting held at Shropshire Archives on 2 May 2015 attracted a large group in attendance who were adamant that a new county committee should be established. An excellent committee has come together with Professor Richard Hoyle acting as interim chairman, Dr James Bowen of the University of Liverpool as secretary and Nigel Hinton, as treasurer. The county committee has now met twice and gone a long way to devising a strategy for the revival of the county.



The first outcome of all the planning that is currently going on will be a public launch event at the Guildhall in Shrewsbury on Saturday 31 October when Dr Keith Lilley of Queen's University Belfast and Dr Barrie Trinder will speak on aspects of the history of the market towns of Shropshire. Thereafter we hope to have a whole range of funding raising occasions, but moreover, our publication programme includes the second volume on Shrewsbury in late 2016 or 2017, a VCH 'Short' on Wem, in late 2016 and the revival of work on Bradford Hundred in the north-east of the county to resume where the county-funded VCH staff left off a decade ago.

In parallel with this Richard Hoyle and James Bowen have had discussions with the Ludlow Historical Research Group and we very much hope that they will join with VCH to produce a red book volume on Ludlow. We hope to have a launch meeting there early in 2016.

Of course, it goes without saying that we have space and roles for many more supporters – as volunteer researchers and fundraisers for instance – and we have room on the county committee for anyone who feels committed to the revival of VCH Shropshire and wants to lend their support. Offers of help or requests to be kept updated on developments should be sent to J.P.Bowen@liverpool.ac.uk

We will circulate details of the public launch on Saturday 31 October far and wide when they are confirmed, but keep the day free in your diaries!

Community-led Research Survey

Assessing the Value of Community-led Research

Historic England has commissioned Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service to find out how much archaeology, historic building and local history research is carried out by voluntary groups in England. The project will also assess the value or potential value this research has for enhancing Historic Environment Records (HERs) and Research Frameworks.

Local history and archaeology societies, diving groups and historic building enthusiasts are encouraged to contribute by completing an online survey. Whether your interest is in medieval manors or inter-war industry, your response will enable us to better understand the contribution of your efforts to heritage research, and to make sure that local history, historic building and archaeological research is better valued.

Survey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/community-heritage-research>

You can also complete the survey by post – please contact Rob Hedge on 01905 765654.

The survey closes on 21st August 2015.

Heritage Open Days 2015

This year's Heritage Open Days will be taking place from 10th – 13th September 2015. For full details of local events and activities see: www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Copy deadline for the Spring 2016 Newsletter is Friday 26th February 2016. Copy can be mailed to the Newsletter Editor at 7 Elstree Close, Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, SY3 9QF or emailed to shelagh228@msn.com

NB The Council is not responsible for any statement made, or opinion expressed in the *Newsletter* of the Society.